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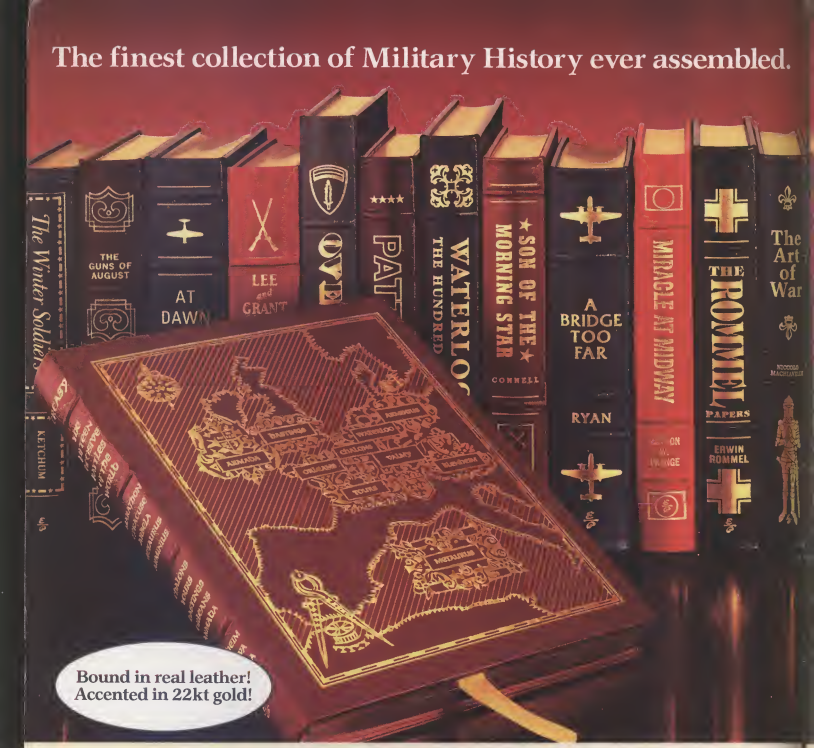

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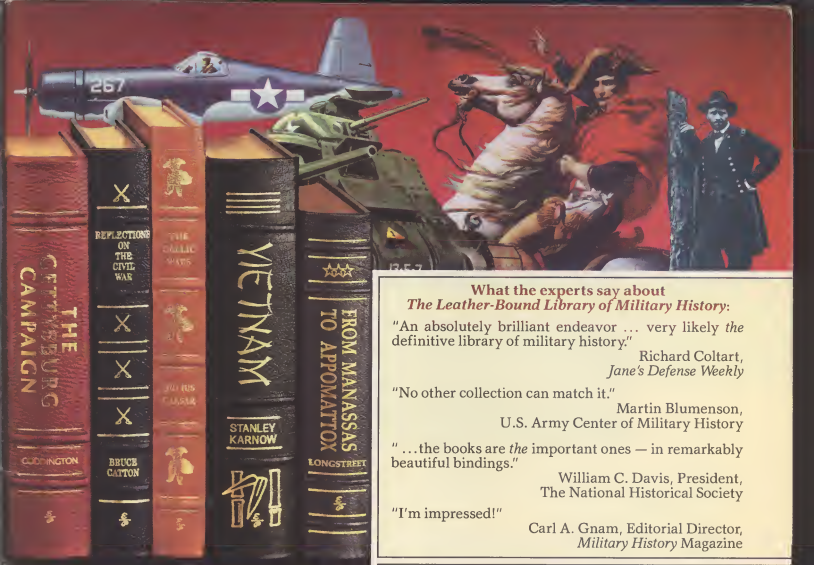

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World War II

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Starting with Pearl Harbor, Japanese midget submarines were sent out on tough missions against the Imperial Navy's new enemies.
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Those planes flashing silver-like in the sky above Gibraltar and dropping sticks of bombs on the British naval base were neither German, nor Italian . . . but French.

42 MOUNTAIN BREAKTHROUGH IN ITALY
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To crack the Germans' formidable Gothic Line in Italy and spearhead the drive to the Po Valley, the Allies gambled upon an untried American division of skiers and mountain climbers.

COVER: When Hitler first sent Erwin Rommel's *Afrika Korps* to North Africa early in 1941, the troopers wore these jungle-style pith helmets to cover their heads from the broiling African sun, but they soon—from the future Field Marshal on down the ranks—discarded them for the more comfortable soft cloth caps or more protective steel helmets. In this photo, a German machine-gun crew takes shelter in a rocky position. ABOVE: The Germans occupied conquered Norway for five years, despite domestic Resistance attacks and commando raids from the Allies. Here, these two *Alpenkorps Jägers* stand guard on a coastline that Hitler always anticipated would be invaded by the Allies—but never was.

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For one Japanese force, Pearl Harbor would be both a disaster and an obscure footnote to the history of World War II.

Not everyone gets to be an historical footnote, and for young Japanese Ensign Kasuo Sakamaki on Pearl Harbor Day, that distinction came the hard way. Sakamaki in fact began the day, much less ended his role, in footnote status. He began the day in the water, and not in the air.

Not swimming in the water, exactly, but piloting one of the five midget submarines (story, Page 8) the Japanese launched against the U.S. Pacific Fleet on December 7, 1941, in concert with their surprise air attack on the American naval base in the Hawaiian Islands.

The midget subs did not have quite the success of the air armada for which the surprise attack chiefly is known. All five of the two-man craft were lost, and none struck a target with the three torpedoes thought to have been fired.

Type A captured Japanese midget submarines on Kiska Island in the Aleutians being inspected by U.S. Navymen on Aug. 15, 1943. These shore-based midgets never saw combat, but were sabotaged instead by internal explosions.

As a second, but grim, footnote reference for Sakamaki, he apparently was the only one of the ten Japanese crewmen to survive the attack by the flotilla of midget subs.

It was, naturally, an experience he never would forget.

His "mother" submarine, the I.24, had surfaced off the harbor entrance to Pearl the evening of December 6. "We could see the stars twinkling," said Sakamaki many years later. "There were many lights visible from the shore. I listened to music from a Honolulu radio station."

Strapped onto the deck of his mother ship was a 75-foot metal tube packing two 18-inch torpedoes. Sakamaki and his crewman, Petty Officer Kiyoshi Inagaki, were supposed to climb into it shortly after midnight, make for Pearl Harbor—seven miles away—and sink the battleship *Pennsylvania* at its moorings.

The plan was foiled from the start—Sakamaki's midget sub wouldn't steer properly and bucked the running seas "like a wild horse," he recalled. "Every time I started the engines, the nose popped up to the surface. So for three hours Inagaki and I carried heavy lead ballast from the stern to the bow. This exhausted us."

Finally on course and running beneath the water's surface, Sakamaki raised his periscope for a quick glimpse of their surroundings, only to see two American patrol boats so close, "I could see the seamen running on the deck." In the depth-charging that followed, the midget's torpedo-launching gear was wrecked and both crewmen suffered minor injuries.

But they escaped. "I made up my mind to enter the harbor and dash into a battleship and explode the torpedoes that way."

Sakamaki's midget banged into a coral reef instead, popped to the surface in full view of an American destroyer, then—at his direction—backed into deeper waters. They would wait for dark that night—December 7—and try again to enter the harbor. "By this time, the bad air and gas in the sub and the tension had almost killed us."

They couldn't, after repeated attempts, manage to penetrate the harbor that night. They decided to save their tiny boat for future attacks against Japan's new enemies by keeping the planned rendezvous with their mother boat off Lanai Island, southeast of Pearl. "At dawn on December 8, we surfaced off what we thought was Lanai," recalled Sakamaki later, "but it turned out we were near the northeast coast of Oahu Island—way off course."

They then grounded on another coral reef, firmly stuck this time. "We set the sub on fire and jumped overboard. I was so exhausted I was unable to swim, so I just floated on my back. Inagaki tried to swim to shore and I learned later that he drowned."

The exhausted Sakamaki, meanwhile, fell unconscious, even while he was floating in the water. "And the next thing I remember was being picked up on the beach by an American Army sergeant."

That would have been near Bellows Field, and the American Sergeant was David Abuki. Both men then became footnotes, since Sakamaki instantly qualified as the first Japanese combatant taken prisoner by the Americans in World War II, and Abuki as his captor.

"Pretty short war," said Sakamaki years later, by then the chief of exports for Toyota Motor Co., Ltd., Japan's largest auto-maker. "The Pearl Harbor attack started World War II for me—and ended it."

C.B.K.

World War II

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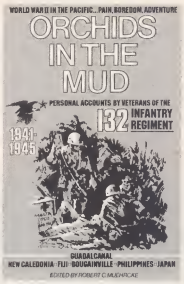
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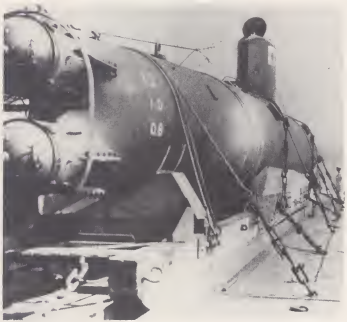
Japan's midget submarines were launched throughout the war with high hopes of destruction to the enemy.

By Dorr B. Carpenter

The first indication of enemy activity in the Hawaii area prior to the air attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, came when the U.S. destroyer *Ward* sank a small, unidentified submarine off the channel entrance early that morning.

No one on the *Ward* had ever seen such a submarine before, but later that morning another small submarine was spotted and depth-charged inside Pearl Harbor. Still later, one of the midgets ran aground on the windward side of Oahu and was recovered, intact. It gave Americans their first look at this underwater weapons system the Japanese had managed to keep secret for years.



Japanese Navy midget sub number 69, Type C, on board Transport Number Five outside Kure Harbor on Aug. 17, 1944, in its launching cradle, held fast by chains.

All in all, the Japanese used five of the midget, two-man submarines in their Pearl Harbor attack. They had planned on the midgets either sneaking into the harbor to torpedo combatant ships moored there, or laying off the entrance to sink any ships that tried to sortie after the air attack began.

The submarine "pilots" had been briefed as to their duties in the attack. Under no circumstances were they to attack before the Japanese aircraft did. After entering the harbor they were to proceed around Ford Island, keeping it on their port side, and fire torpedoes as they saw targets. The anti-submarine nets were expected to be open and no problems were foreseen in entering or leaving the harbor.

After launching the midgets, their five mother ships were to move out of the area and keep clear of the ensuing action. Their primary duty was to recover the midgets' crews. The pick-up rendezvous was designated as a point seven miles off the west tip of Lanai Island. Speed and safety were the main consideration; the midgets were to be scuttled after their crews were back on board the mother ship.

As all but one of the ten Japanese pilots were lost, no one can say what precisely did happen, but it is generally thought that only one midget actually entered the harbor at Pearl. This would have been the craft piloted by a Lieutenant Yokoyama, who fired two torpedoes at a destroyer, probably the *Helm*, and a tender, before he was depth-charged and sunk by the USS *Monaghan*.

Another midget pilot was unable to control his craft immediately after being launched, and it ran aground near the harbor entrance. A destroyer, probably the *Blue*, shelled it and reported sinking it, but actually the pilot managed to back off the reef and get away, briefly. Later, he ran aground again. He swam ashore near Bellows Field, where he was captured by Sergeant David Akui, which gave young Ensign Kasuo Sakamaki the dubious honor of spending the next four years in the United States as Japanese prisoner-of-war Number One. His companion crewman was drowned.

The submarine attacked by the *Ward*, at about 6:45 that morning, was sunk more than an hour before the first Japanese planes appeared over Pearl Harbor, but due to poor communications procedures and hesitation on the part of watch officers ashore, the report of an unidentified submarine in the defensive sea area did not reach the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, Admiral Husband Kimmel, until it was too late to take any counteraction.

Although possible, it is unlikely that either of the other two midgets got into Pearl Harbor. It is known, however, that destroyers did attack submarines outside the harbor—those could only have been the two unaccounted-for midgets, for no other submarines were that close to shore.

As daring as the plan may have been in its inception, it misfired badly. The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, insofar as the use of midget submarines was concerned, paid poor dividends. All five midgets were lost before the day was over, nine of the ten crewmen were drowned, one was captured, and only three torpedoes were fired, but all of them missed their targets.

With higher expectations, to be sure, development of the midget submarines began in Japan in 1933, under Captain Kaneharu Kishimoto, who was assisted by Commander Toshihida Asama, a torpedo specialist; Commander Kiyoshi Yamada, an expert on motors; Commander Ariki Katayama, whose specialty was hull construction, and Commander Takeshi Nawa, an expert on electrical storage batteries. The entire project, classified top secret, was carried on at the direction of Admiral of the Fleet, Prince Hiroyasu Fushim.

The goal was to produce an auxil-

Continued on page 58

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It's about time someone took action to memorialize the Solomon Islands battles from Guadalcanal through Bougainville. First, the single greatest military action in World War II, the Battle for Guadalcanal must be memorialized.

This battle will remain in military history as significant a battle as Gettysburg and Waterloo. Moreover, the Guadalcanal campaign was a six-month intense bloody land struggle, vicious air battles, and a series of the most deadly naval actions in modern times. Guadalcanal not only brought the invading forces to an abrupt halt but initiated their destruction. The Solomon Island Campaign made certain this destruction took place.

First, to memorialize the Marines, Navy, Army, Air Corps, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and our Allies, plans are being made for a showcase tour of such battle sites as Red Beach, Henderson Field, the Ilu River Delta, Edson's Bloody Ridge, the Matanikau River, the Bloody Ridge at Fighter Strip One, Mt. Austen, Cape Esperance, and other key areas.

Recently, land at Skyline Ridge on Guadalcanal was purchased from the Solomon Island government to build a memorial to honor the entire Solomon Island Campaign and the men and women who served there.

In addition, the Medal of Honor awardees for valor at Guadalcanal will be memorialized on bronze plaques to be placed at Henderson Field and aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Guadalcanal. Also, all ships sunk to Iron Bottom Bay will be honored in a similar manner. Most of all a very impressive monument will be placed at Edson's Bloody Ridge, a memorial of such beauty and grace that it will attract world attention. Our architect-designer, Walter Bugel, will visit Guadalcanal in August 1987 to arrange the building of our memorial.

Help us memorialize the sacrifice of our comrades in arms: our Marines, Army, Navy, Air Corps, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and our Allies, the Solomon Islanders, the Australians, the New Zealanders, the Fijians, and the New Guinea "Police Boys." Together we defeated the finest our enemy put forth.

Robert C. Muehrcke, M.D., F.A.C.P.
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Riding his Piper Cub through the skies over France, "Bazooka Charlie" fought a one-man war.

By Marlene Gantt

Buzzing over the German submarine base at Lorient, France, in his L-4 Piper Cub spotter plane, Major Charles Carpenter saw buttons of flak approaching in the sky and quickly ducked under. According to his newspaper-correspondent passenger, Carpenter merely laughed and "wriggled" into a river valley, hopping between trees and over hedges.

All in a day's work, apparently. "My luck's a tradition," said Carpenter. "I hope you don't mind my way of flying."

In short time after the Normandy landings of June 1944, Carpenter's "way of flying" his artillery-spotter for the Fourth Armored Division of Patton's Third Army had become such a legend that newspaper reporters were begging rides with the onetime school teacher.

"Flying from 50 to 60 feet above the ground, we had been peering into farm yards and behind the hedges in a country area lying between the outer defenses and the main citadel behind the low-lying seaport," wrote Gault M'Gowan after the Lorient foray.

It was not only the hedge-hopping, but Carpenter's penchant for arming his slow-moving Cub with bazookas that attracted all the attention—and a colorful nickname.

"A flight in Major Charles Carpenter's bazooka-shooting Cub observation plane is something like a ride in a roller coaster equipped with sky rockets," wrote *Stars and Stripes* correspondent Ken Koyen. "The 32-year-old liaison pilot, who taught history in Moline, Illinois, but now hunts tanks with the six bazookas mounted under the wings of his tiny aircraft, sometimes takes a passenger, although it cramps his gunnery."

"Bazooka Charlie" was the nickname that Carpenter picked up once he strapped on the infantryman's rocket tube and began pecking away at German tanks and other targets from his platform in the sky. "He rides the skies in his unarmed, slow-moving artillery observation plane as though it were a Lightning or Thunderbolt," wrote M'Gowan another time.

As an artillery spotter for the U.S. Fourth Armored Division of Patton's Third Army, Major Charles Carpenter and his rocket-spitting Piper Cub aircraft "Rosie the Rocketer" quickly became legendary in Normandy in 1944.

Before the advent of his bazookas, Carpenter favored dropping hand grenades on the enemy below, it seems.

One time, he landed his plane and "liberated" Quimperle, an inland port located in Britanny, all by himself. *Almost* by himself, actually—correspondent M'Gowan happened to be riding along that day, too.

Another time, Carpenter saw a column of American tanks stalled outside a French village by German artillery. He landed nearby, ran to the lead tank, grabbed its .50-caliber machine gun and ordered the seemingly leaderless tanks forward.

As Asssociated Press War Correspondent J. Wes Gallagher soon wrote for the readers of newspapers back home: "He is fast becoming a legend in Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's army, where eccentricity is not unknown and bravery is commonplace."

Only months before, Carpenter had led the quiet, uneventful life of a school teacher in Middle America. But then came Pearl Harbor—and after it, the starvation death of his brother in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp. Charles Carpenter was more than eager to "join up" and settle a score. Due to civilian experience as a flight instructor back home, he was able to volunteer for his artillery-spotter role in Piper Cubs. He was assigned to the Fourth Armored Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. John S. "Tiger Jack" Wood, a Patton think-alike noted as a hard-charging leader even in the hard-charging Third Army.

When the Fourth Armored landed at Utah Beach one month after the Normandy invasion of June 6, the men unloaded in an eerie silence. Before them were upturned jeeps, sunken ships—the debris of war. And on invasion day, they knew, the same beach had been strewn with the dead and wounded.

At the moment, though, they had a war to catch up to. While its L-4 Cubs were flown across the English Channel, the division rolled unopposed for miles until it finally did catch up with the battle lines. As the Cub spotters then flew ahead checking the landscape for targets and enemy activity, the men in the tanks below affectionately called the spotter wing the "Fourth Armored Air Force."

Third Army Commander Patton needed first-hand knowledge of the terrain ahead, since he was likely to stop for nothing. His Cubs flying

Continued on page 61

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An OSS team parachuting into enemy territory added its bit to the hotbed of Norwegian resistance.

By Richard Montpelier

Painted black as the sky above them, the eight Liberator bombers set a course for the distant North Sea after lifting from the runways in England with thunderous roar. Aboard, men anticipating action settled in for the long flight and fought down their nerves as best they could.

The lumbering B-24s droned on, their "target" a frozen lake in the mountainous north of German-occupied Norway. It was late in the war—March 24, 1945—but Norway still was a battleground tying down 17 German divisions. One major reason was *resistance*, and the highly-trained specialists aboard the eight Liberators comprised an OSS-sponsored team planning to parachute into Norway and add to the widespread sabotage, harassment and sporadic mayhem already afflicting the German occupiers.

The men of the American OSS's Norwegian Special Operations Group (NORSO) were headed by a slightly-built, bespectacled American major who five years earlier had been a college boy about to graduate from Princeton—William Colby. A veteran of similar, behind-the-lines operations in France, the youthful Colby already knew how easily even the best-laid plans could go wrong.

This night would be no exception.

Colby and his team of Norwegian-Americans had been awaiting their night drop for two months—their air crews needed moonlight to reveal rivers and lakes on the ground as navigation points. Bad weather had aborted planned drops in January and February. But now it was March, and Operation RYPE was underway at last. The drop, inland from the tortured Norwegian coastline, would be on frozen Lake Jaevsjo, north of the port of Trondheim. The NORSO team's mission, as later explained by Colby himself, was "to sabotage the Northland Railway over which the Germans were moving 150,000 troops toward the final battle of Germany after having been pushed out of Finland."

Groups such as those led by OSS team leader William Colby had to be constantly on the lookout for roaming German Gebirgsjäger *(mountain troop) patrols, such as this one on skis.*

At the last minute, the NORSO group had to change both the intended sabotage target and the planned drop zone—from a Norwegian exile newspaper in London, the OSS learned that the Germans had beefed up their defenses in the originally intended target area. Now the target would be the Grana rail bridge in the heavily wooded mountains north of Trondheim.

At least, that's what Colby thought when the time came for his jump over the frozen lake close to midnight.

He landed without incident or injury, then made his way through a ground mist until he spotted a bonfire. That should be his contact with the Norwegian Resistance. Colby saw "a tall figure" awaiting him as he walked carefully forward. He drew his pistol, "just in case."

As they met, Colby stated the prearranged password in his basic, hastily learned Norwegian: "Is the fishing good in this lake?"

The contact man was supposed to say, "Yes, particularly in the winter." Instead, the stranger looked at Colby "rather quizzically" and said, "To tell you the truth, it's no good at all."

Although Colby was startled for the moment, it was only a minor crisis—the contact man was very much for real. Soon Colby's other NORSO-team members were gathering; the OSS men collected their supplies and parachutes from scattered points on the frozen lake.

"We established a camp in the woods with our parachutes for tents, so that we would not be seen by Easter skiers. Our local Norwegian reception committee, six resistance team members, a reindeer herder and guide, and an isolated farmer, told us the Germans were in Snaasa Valley, twenty miles west."

For the moment, though, Colby was forced to wait. Only four of the Liberators leaving England the evening

Strange advice from the authors:

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But that's only the beginning, if the peaceniks have their way and Russia ever does take over. The alternative might be to spend the rest of your days up near the Arctic Circle.

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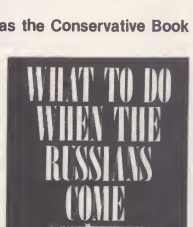

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before had reached the drop zone in Norway—three of the big Liberators had been forced to turn back before completing the long flight, and a fourth had dropped its OSS men 50 miles inside the borders of neutral Sweden, where they apparently would be interned.

If Colby and his team were to be momentarily stymied, that does not mean that resistance in Norway ground to a halt. Nor had the Resistance been awaiting this latest Allied "insertion" as a signal to rise up at last. Far from either proposition, Norway had been a thorn in Nazi Germany's side ever since its seizure in a rapid campaign five years earlier.

Colby, destined later in life to be director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), would be in Norway to war's end, but in late March of 1945, he had no such inkling. All he knew was that he was in enemy-occupied territory with too few men to carry out his assigned sabotage mission.

Accompanied by six Norwegian Resistance Fighters, he and his 16 NORSO team members nonetheless set out for the Grana bridge, 100 miles and six days away by cross-country ski trek.

They reached the Northland Railway without incident, but they found the German force guarding the Grana railway bridge too large to take on with such a small number in their own party. Consulting his maps, Colby found a smaller bridge at a place called Tangen. "We arrived about dawn, set our charges and waited for a possible train, in hopes of repeating the sabotage operation that our Norwegian colleagues had pulled off nearby some months before. There a German troop train had run straight into the stream at Jorstad, some hours after the bridge had been blown."

Colby posted look-outs armed with walkie-talkies up and down the tracks—if a train came along, he wanted to be sure it wasn't a passenger train full of Norwegian civilians. "Finally, the wait becoming too long, we blew the bridge and left our small American-flag shoulder patches to show who had done it and, hopefully, protect the local population from German reprisal."

The team's days-long trek by skis back to their base camp at Lake Jaevsjo was a roundabout one, and they were hard pressed to elude and out-distance the certain pursuit by truck-borne patrols. Exhausted, Colby used Benzedrine as a stimulant for the hurried ascent of "one long, steep climb" on the way.

At the lake, where the team's hideout now was a farm, Colby was delighted to find his five men who had been dropped in Sweden by mistake, then interned. They, "with a conspiratorial wink from the Swedish intelligence authorities," had been allowed to leave and rejoin the OSS team across the Norwegian border.

After a few days' rest, Colby's group next attacked the railroad in small teams assigned to blow intermittent rails with minor explosive charges. Colby's own group was just finishing its work on the rail line about midnight when another team's charge went off down the line. Fifty yards from Colby, a German flare suddenly lit the sky—"a bullet kicked a pebble against my forehead."

Colby wouldn't allow his men to respond to the German fire with automatic weapons, since that would alert the enemy to the presence of a "regular" unit. Instead, the OSS men retrieved their skis and slipped away in the dark. "Applying the lesson of my drop in France, I made the group keep going all the way back to base, taking a roundabout route to point the German patrols in the wrong direction

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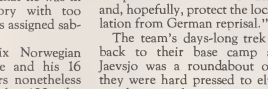

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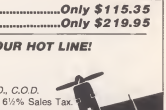

until a friendly snowstorm covered our tracks."

Later, as elsewhere in Europe the war was coming to an end, a five-man German patrol did stumble across the NORSO group. In the skirmish that followed, all five Germans died.

Later, too, a Lapp reindeer herder reported the wreckage of an airplane on high ground not far away. The investigating NORSOs found the bodies of an air crew and four of their own original team members—the plane had crashed while trying to drop the additional four men.

Soon, on May 8, the war in Europe officially ended. Colby and his men were left awaiting further orders. On May 11, they received word to proceed to the Snaasa Valley, 20 miles away, and receive the surrender of the German garrison there.

With two six-foot sergeants as escort, and the rest of the NORSO team covering from behind, a somewhat apprehensive Colby approached the gates of the German camp. As it turned out, however, "The German commander was more nervous than I, and he quickly assured me that all German units would remain in their camps in perfect discipline."

After a triumphant march down the highway to Trondheim, every village turning out a throng of excited, cheering Norwegians, the NORSO group still had one more chore to perform. Sixty miles up the coast was the town of Namsos, temporary home of 10,000 German troops awaiting final orders and repatriation. The Norwegians there wanted "some visible reassurance that the war indeed was over." The Allied Command sent Colby and about 30 of his men.

It was, at first, a tense situation. German sailors circled the harbor chanting "*Sieg Heil*," while on the streets German soldiers were "accidentally" bumping shoulders with the NORSO men. The solution of the 25-year-old Major Colby was to announce an inspection of the German naval craft in the harbor.

"Taking three NORSO members, all former Norwegian merchant mariners, I climbed aboard each ship despite the sullen looks of the crewmen. And that put an end to all demonstrations; the message was clear to all that the war indeed was over. Inspection made the point to German as well as Norwegian."

Back in the United States some months later, the war in the Pacific mercifully ended also. William Colby was awarded the Silver Star for valor in combat. In Colby's view, however, it often isn't a combatant's response to action that is the measure of heroism, but rather the earlier, voluntary commitment to unknown dangers.

"Later on, when the mission itself is underway," he wrote years later in his autobiography *Honorable Men*, "all sorts of irresistible factors come into play that require a man to behave bravely, independently of his will, very often without a second thought." Among those factors, he listed peer pressure, the instinct for survival, or plain, simple comradeship with others facing the same danger.

To OSS volunteer Colby, it is "in the tranquillity of an office, before any of these factors begin to have any force [that] a man does measure his courage and decide whether he is willing to risk his life, and why."

The outcome of the war did not turn upon the contributions of Colby and his NORSO team in its final weeks, but like all those in the tireless Norwegian Resistance they had made their own, individual commitments long before their eight blackened Liberators lifted off from friendly territory for the night drop over a frozen lake in German-occupied Norway. □

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Strategy Split For Aggression

When the Japanese Imperial Navy issued orders to prepare for a war with America, a startled Japanese Army had to shift from preoccupation with the Russian bear to the north.

By Edward J. Drea

Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, began a string of uninterrupted victories that culminated with the American surrender in the Philippines in May 1942. The shock of Imperial Japan's devastating and ruthless defeat of the Western powers convinced Americans of a long-standing and detailed Japanese timetable for world conquest. The Imperial Japanese Navy, in fact, had long planned for a war with the U.S. Navy, but the Imperial Japanese Army had no long-range strategic concept for a war with the United States because, for the Army, the Pacific War was the wrong war at the wrong place at the wrong time and with the wrong enemy.

"Strategy," according to Clausewitz, "is the use of the engagement for the purpose of the war. The strategist must therefore define an aim for the entire operational side of the war that will be in accordance with its purpose. In other words, he will draft the plan of the war, and the aim will determine the series of actions intended to achieve it; he will, in fact, shape the individual campaigns and, within these, decide on the individual engagements."

Based on this classic definition, the Imperial Japanese Army leaders had no strategy for their war against the Western powers, nor did they develop a strategy during the course of the war. As a result, the leaders of the Japanese Army, more often than not, had to follow the lead of the Japanese Navy.

Several factors contributed to the Army's failure to develop a strategic approach to the Pacific War. One was interservice rivalry with the Imperial Navy. Another was the ineffectiveness of the Japanese command and control system at the level of Imperial General Headquarters. A third was the tendency of Japanese Army officers to think in tactical and operational terms, not in the strategic realm. Perhaps the Japanese Army's preoccupation from 1905 until 1941 with devising a continental strategy against Imperial Russia—later the Soviet Union—was the major factor that affected the Army's conception about any future war with America.

When Navy planners notified their Army counterparts on August 14, 1941, that the schedule for preparations for war against the United States and Great Britain was to be completed by October 15, the Army staffers were taken aback. They had no concrete preparations for such a war in hand. Mesmerized by their traditional enemy, the Soviet Union to the strategic north, the Japanese Army commanders had given little consideration to a war on their strategic southern flank. In short, they did not consider the United States a serious opponent until the very moment of hostilities. As a consequence, the Army chieftains lacked a comprehensive plan for war with the West in the Pacific theater.

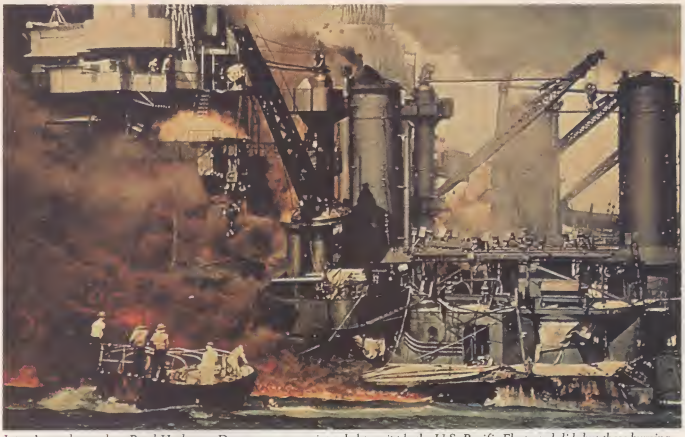
The Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-

Seeking the British Navy base and port of Hong Kong was a major Japanese aim in the early days of the Pacific War. This landing party of Imperial Army infantrymen charge ashore to encounter little enemy resistance.

Japanese Premier at the time of Pearl Harbor was General Hideki Tojo, seen here in full military regalia on the cover of a period magazine. He was convicted and hanged as a war criminal by the Allies.

05) had cost the Army 118,000 dead or disabled officers and men as 19th-century tactics met 20th-century technology such as machine guns, barbed wire, improved artillery and hardened fortifications. Japanese Army blood won Japanese supremacy in Korea and the right to station troops in Manchuria. After the costly triumph, however, the Japanese general staff worried that the Russians, seething for revenge, would never accept a continued Japanese presence in Manchuria and Korea—the Army's main concern was the possibility of another war with Imperial Russia over Manchuria. Therefore, Japan's armed forces had to be prepared to repel the inevitable Russian counter offensive in the Far East.

Concern over the Russian bear appeared in Imperial Defense Policy devised by a Supreme Command composed of the Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff who formulated strategy, planning, and who conducted operations. The Army General Staff's functions were distinct from those of the War Ministry, whose Minister, an active-duty general officer, was a member of the cabinet. The War Ministry had charge of administration, personnel and related matters. The Naval General Staff had charge of operations, and the Navy Minister of policymaking. In time of war, the respective Army and Navy General Staffs became the Army and Navy departments of Imperial General Headquarters (IGHQ). And IGHQ's purpose was to serve as the central directing and coordinating organ of the Army and Navy high commands.



Japan's sneak attack at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, was intended to cripple the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and did, but these burning battleships were not the primary targets. Those—the U.S. carrier strike force—had already left port, much to enemy dismay.

Membership included the chiefs of both general staffs and their selected subordinates, as well as staff officers from the more important bureaus and sections in the War and Navy ministries. The IGHQ-Government Liaison Conference (attended by the Prime Minister, War, Navy, and Foreign ministers, plus the chiefs of both staffs) decided policy, to be implemented in turn by the responsible military or government agency. Major decisions—such as war with America—received the Emperor's sanction at an imperial conference and then were implemented.

In theory, IGHQ executed the joint strategy the chiefs of the general staffs formulated. In fact, the Army's main threat was perceived as Russia while the Navy's was the United States. And interservice rivalry, not cooperation, would only complicate that divergence.

Such thinking persisted even through World War I. The revised "Imperial Defense Policy" of 1918 listed Japan's hypothetical enemies in a future war as Russia, America, and China. The post-World War I naval arms race between Japan and the United States forced Japanese Army leaders to acknowledge that in case of a war between Japan and America, they would cooperate with the Imperial Navy and attack American bases in the Philippine Islands. The Army's acquiescence was, however, mere lip service to interservice cooperation—the Army pursued no concrete research nor developed specific operational plans for a ground campaign in the Philippines.

The Japanese General Staff revised the "Imperial Defense Policy" again in 1923 and this time assumed that the United States would be Japan's most likely future foe. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had overthrown the czarist monarchy and pitched the newly created Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics into a state of apparent chronic instability. With Russia preoccupied over domestic problems, Japanese leaders no longer needed to fear a strategic ground threat from the north, and the Army could turn its attention to its southern flank.

In 1924 the Committee for the Research of Military Preparations Against the United States was established within the General Staff, and within a year the committee produced an operational concept outlining plans for the occupation of Guam and the Philippine Islands. Immediately before the opening of hostilities, the outline proposed, an emergency mobilization order would activate one and one-half Army divisions for amphibious operations against Lingayen Gulf and Lamon Bay on Luzon Island. Plans called for the occupation of Manila and the completion of Japanese operations in the Philippines before the American main battle fleet could steam to its rescue.

The defense of the Philippines would be a dilemma for the U.S. Army because its forces were too weak to hold all the islands. Accordingly, the U.S. Army designed its defense for the Philippines to hold the Japanese at bay. The 1914 war plans called on the Army to hold Corregidor Island in Manila Bay for 60 days, to allow time for the Navy to arrive with reinforcements. Ten years later American joint planners decided the Army should hold all of Manila Bay as a future operating base for the U.S. Navy. By 1932, the U.S. Army was back to defending only the entrance to Manila Bay in case of hostilities. General Douglas MacArthur's ambitious decision in 1941 to hold all of Luzon thus was a marked departure from prewar Army planning.

In the meantime, Japanese plans also changed. A 1936 revision of "Imperial Defense Policy" assumed Japan's likely opponents to be the United States, the Soviet Union, China and Great Britain. In the American-war scenario, the Japanese Army would occupy Luzon as well as fortresses in Manila Bay and Guam. Having concurred in this strategy, however, the Army then, the following year,

placed its Fifth and Eleventh divisions, both trained in amphibious operations and earmarked for operations against the Philippines, in the strategic reserve for possible future operations against the Soviet Union.

Japanese troops had seized Manchuria outright in 1931 and created various autonomous buffer zones in North China from 1932 to 1936, thereby expanding their presence on the Asian continent. In July 1937 the unplanned and unexpected military escalation of a minor incident outside the gates of Peking resulted in a major undeclared war. The Japanese Army leadership, with certain exceptions, believed that any concessions to the Chinese would only further weaken Japan's position in China.

High-ranking officers such as the War Minister, General Sugiyama Hajime; the Kwantung Army Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Tojo Hideki, and the General Staff's Operations Branch Chief, Colonel Muto Akira, favored a military solution to the so-called China Problem, which they incorrectly assumed would require but a few months. Other influential officers—the General Staff's Operations Department Director, Maj. Gen. Ishiwara Kanji, for one—regarded the use of Japanese troops in China as wasteful because all Japanese soldiers would be needed for other wars. Ishiwara foresaw one, first, with the Soviet Union and a final, apocalyptic war with the United States. Others, like Tojo, also believed a war with the Soviets was inevitable, but they saw the opportunity to secure Japan's open eastern flank in such a war by subjugating China. The Japanese learned, as have others before and after, that however "undeclared" wars may start, they sometimes prove very difficult to stop.

For the Japanese Army, the China War (1937-1945) became a meatgrinder. By the end of 1937, the Imperial Army had 700,000 troops in China, approximately its total pre-war standing army. Japanese casualties were extremely heavy. In operations from August to November 1937 to clear Shanghai and advance up the Yangtze River to the Chinese Nationalist capital of Nanking, the Japanese suffered 40,000 casualties. In July 1938, the Japanese Army had 23 divisions fighting in China—only nine were in Korea and Manchuria poised against the traditional Russian enemy from the north, and but two were held in strategic reserve in the homeland. Even before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese casualties in the China fighting amounted to 190,000 killed and 520,000 wounded, mainly Army personnel. Moreover, the unplanned China War disrupted all Japanese Army plans to reorganize and re-equip the army to fight the Soviet Union. While the War Ministry and General Staff may have differed over the conduct of the war in China, they remained in agreement that the Soviet Union was the primary enemy. Thus, if Japan could end the China War, it could free its ground forces from a quagmire that seemed to offer nothing save endless attrition.

Unsurprisingly, the Japanese Army's presence on the USSR's Far Eastern borders in the expanded war in China prompted a massive Soviet build-up in the Soviet Far East adjacent to the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. The increase from eight Soviet divisions in 1932 to 30 in 1939 so alarmed Japanese General Staff officers that they reallocated forces to meet the re-invigorated threat from the north. As the distinguished Japanese military historian Fujiwara Akira points out, the United States may have been high on a list of Japan's hypothetical enemies, but Army planners continued to treat an American threat abstractly and failed to produce specific operational plans as the basis for strategic wartime preparations.

Even with the worsening of Japanese-American relations after 1940, the Japanese Army neglected to prepare

TOP: Ironically, the man who least wanted to fight a war against the United States—Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto (seen here saluting aides, traditional Samurai dress sword at his side)—was the commander chosen to launch that very same war in 1941. He was shot down and killed by American fighters in 1943. MIDDLE: Victorious Japanese infantrymen as their long march across the Pacific begins. During the first six months of the war against the British and Americans, the soldiers of Dai Nippon *were everywhere successful. ABOVE: Japanese airpower—both land and carrier-based—was a significant factor in the ability of the island nation to wage war successfully all during the first year of battle against the Western Allies, but it was eventually engulfed by its enemies.*

The American oil embargo against Japan was one of the main reasons she decided to go to war with America. Here, Japanese soldiers with rifles and automatic weapons may be seen on the assault under the derricks of the Yenangjaung oil fields.

thorough plans for a war with the West and instead remained preoccupied with the Soviet threat. Moreover, the Army's main interest in the so-called Southern Region was the occupation of the Dutch East Indies. While Army leaders rather casually assumed a move against the East Indies would mean war with America and Great Britain, the Japanese Army never defined the defeat of those two powers as a strategic objective. Rather the Japanese Army's objective was to seize the natural resources of Southeast Asia.

At the end of May 1940, the Japanese Army faced a crossroads. Japan's ally, Nazi Germany, had overrun western Europe, and the triumph seemed to presage the imminent capitulation of Great Britain. European colonies in East Asia stood almost defenseless as German troops occupied Holland and France while Great Britain gathered her slender resources to oppose the impending German onslaught. If it appeared Germany's victories had presented Japan with the opportunity to advance unhindered into the European colonial empires of Asia, the Japanese Army leadership still did not regard war with the United States as inevitable. The Japanese Army was more interested in concluding its involvement in the stalemated war in China in order that it might again focus all its attention on the Soviet threat.

One strategic means to end the China War, Japanese Army leaders believed, was to isolate China from the rest of the world. Amphibious operations in 1939 and 1940 sealed China's ports, but the nettlesome overland supply route running through French Indochina into southern China remained. If, thought Japan's generals, they could sever that last supply link, then surely the Chinese would cease fighting.

In the meantime, however, the United States had intensified its economic and military pressure to show its displeasure at Japanese aggression in China. The U.S. termination of its 30-year commercial treaty with Japan in July 1939 and the indefinite stationing of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Hawaii as of April 1940 signaled a tougher American policy toward Japan. The Japanese reacted by concluding the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in 1940, both militantly anti-communist and anti-Soviet states. That decision, and the Japanese presence in China, caused the continued deterioration of American and Japanese relations through 1941. Nevertheless, the Japanese General Staff merely determined to continue preparations for an advance to the south into French Indochina, in order to cut the overland supply routes to China, and prepared no strategy for a war with America.

Then, in June 1941, came the electrifying news of Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union. Here, seemingly, was a golden opportunity to vanquish the mortal Soviet enemy, but an Imperial Conference of July 2, 1941, determined that Japan would not enter the war unless a Soviet collapse seemed possible or rebellion erupted in the Soviet Far East. Still, Army preparations for operations against the Soviet Union in such an eventuality had to commence almost immediately, if Japan wanted to be in strategic position to take advantage of any imminent Soviet collapse. The Army General Staff assumed that operations against the USSR would begin on August 29 and conclude in mid-October, before the onset of the brutal Siberian winter. Ultimately, nearly 700,000 Japanese troops in 16 divisions and 600 aircraft assembled in Manchuria under the guise of the Kwantung Army Special Maneuver.

The Soviets, though, failed to play their assigned role in Japanese assumptions because they neither collapsed before the German offensive nor withdrew the 20 divisions from the Soviet Far East as the Japanese war planners expected. Instead, 20 Soviet divisions remained in the Soviet Far East throughout the war and provided sufficient deterrent to their Japanese counterparts. By August 5, 1941, the Japanese Army had abandoned plans for an attack on the Soviet Union.

In terms of strategy against America, the diversion of effort and manpower to the north detracted from the

Army's formulation of war plans against the West and accounted for the Army planners' surprise when presented with the Navy's operational schedule just nine days later, on August 14.

All the while, war with the United States indeed had been growing closer. The American oil embargo against Japan imposed in July 1941 backed Japan into a corner—it especially galled the Navy, which was more dependent on oil for its fleet operations than was the Army, largely an infantry and horse-drawn force. Choices now presented themselves. The Japanese could meet U.S. demands and thereby forsake their gains in China. They could continue diplomatic efforts to affect a favorable compromise with America. Or they could go to war. And here, in the latter scenario, the Japanese Army leaders could not contribute meaningfully to the highest-level decisions for war, because they were woefully ignorant of the overall potential of the American armed forces.

Japanese Army intelligence traditionally had targeted the Soviet Union, not the United States. Most army attachés went to the Soviet Union or to Poland, not to the United States. There were few "experts" on America within the halls of the General Staff offices. Instead, opinion replaced fact—the Japanese Army leaders viewed Americans as products of liberalism and individualism who were conveniently incapable of fighting a protracted war against the Japanese. It followed that Japanese soldiers were far superior to their American foes. Perhaps such stereotyping and underestimation of one's likely enemies is commonplace, but when an army acquiesces to war as a national policy, one expects that an army has a strategy for such a war.

Japanese Army officers thought only in terms of offensive operations to open hostilities with Britain and the United States, the first stage of the war. No serious thought was given to how to conclude the war or to what might constitute victory for Japan. Certainly, they never considered the annihilation of their main opponent, the United States. They remained hazy about operations other than the seizure of the natural resources of Southeast Asia and converting those raw materials for use by the Japanese war machine. Moreover, the continental bias of Army planners showed in the first draft of plans for operations in the Southern Region—they insisted that the Army's operational area be in the region closest to the Asian mainland while the Navy's extend into the Pacific. Consequently, the Army assumed initial responsibility for the Philippines, North Borneo, Malaya, Sumatra and Java. The Navy's zone extended, among other places, to New Guinea and the Bismarcks, two areas that would cost the Army staggering casualties and aircraft losses in the fighting of 1942-1944 over the Solomons and New Guinea. The evolution of the Army's strategic commitment to the southwest Pacific demonstrated that its planners originally gave no thought even to occupying those areas, let alone to formulating a strategy to define the role and scope of operations on extended lines of communications.

On November 5, 1941, Army Chief of Staff Sugiyama, at the Imperial Liaison Conference held at the palace, indicated that if sea lines of communications could be maintained, the Army could establish an invincible posture in the southern areas. Neither Sugiyama nor his naval counterpart, Admiral Nagano Osami, however, forecast with confidence the probability of strategic victory or defeat in the impending war. At root was a basic difference between the Army and the Navy in strategic conception of the Pacific as an area of operations. Army planners simply had no means, and could discover none, to inflict a decisive defeat or subjugate the enemy in the Pacific. Naval theor-

TOP: Here, Vice Admiral Tomoshige Samejima, commander-in-chief of the Imperial Navy's Eighth Fleet, rides to attend yet another high-level wartime conference. MIDDLE: Soon, they, too, would be off to the wars of conquest, many never to return. ABOVE: Japanese Army General Masaharu Homma lands in the Philippine Islands. He defeated both U.S. Army Generals Douglas MacArthur and Jonathan M. Wainwright.

ists, however, traditionally conceived of the western Pacific as the theater for the decisive main battle-fleet engagement that their planners had been dreaming about for a generation.

The Army in the end opted to acquire a sufficient strategic base to engage in a protracted war of attrition and exhaustion, while the Navy clamored for active offensive operations designed to produce the decisive battle of the war. Moreover, the development of island airbases convinced the Japanese Navy to extend the distance of the decisive fleet engagement from the pre-war Marianas line to a more advanced line running from Wake Island through the Marshalls to the Bismarck Archipelago. The Army thought of Rabaul as a forward base covering the Japanese naval base at Truk in the Caroline Islands, while the Navy considered it an advance base for anticipated offensive operations.

Similarly, early in 1942, while the Navy expanded its frontage in the Pacific, the Army wanted to reduce the number of its ground units in the southern areas. The Army plan called for the reduction of 450,000 troops in 11 divisions and 77 aerial squadrons to 250,000 men in 7 divisions with 50 squadrons by the end of 1942. The 200,000 troops withdrawn from the area would be re-equipped and reorganized and then used to strengthen Japanese Army preparations against the Soviet Union. This strategic redeployment to the north was but part of the General Staff's replenishment plan decided in March 1942. According to this plan, Japan's existing 51 ground divisions and 150 air squadrons would be increased by 1950 to the 100 divisions and 1,000 squadrons that the General Staff now believed necessary for the conduct of a 10-year conflict with America. Still, Japan's original strategy for subduing the southern regions did not exceed a five-month operational plan.

To compound the short-sighted planning, the Japanese Army's high command estimated that any serious Allied counterattack in the Pacific would not commence until the latter half of 1943. By then Japan would have used the time to withdraw selected units from the South Pacific, reconstitute them and, simultaneously develop an invincible defensive perimeter from which to repel the anticipated Allied counteroffensive. The Army thought in terms of a strategic defensive, but the Navy continued to press for more aggressive operations.

The Navy's ambitious March 1942 plan called for the occupation of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on May 7, 1942; Midway a month later, and the Aleutians by the end of June. By early July the Japanese would occupy New Caledonia and by August 1 Fiji, and 20 days later, Samoa. Basic assumptions that underpinned such grandiose undertakings had little connection with Japan's main opponent, the United States. The Japanese high command assumed, for instance, that Nazi Germany's 1942 spring offensive would defeat the Soviet Union and thereby eliminate the threat to Japan from the north. Japanese thrusts into the Indian Ocean and against Australia would isolate Great Britain from her colonies and likely cause Britain's collapse. The war itself would reduce the heretofore high standard of living of both Britain and the United States and, if neither nation nourished hope of victory, civilian morale would plummet, adversely affecting the war effort. The defeat of Great Britain, moreover, would have tremendous psychological repercussions in the United States, possibly causing the Americans to conclude a negotiated peace with Japan. These misplaced notions provided the hothouse for the germination of the so-called FS-Operation.

As early as August 1941, the Army Vice Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Tsukada Osamu, had opposed the use of Army troops for a Bismarck-Islands operation. "If we send small numbers of troops to isolated islands in distant seas," he reasoned, "command and control as well as resupply will be extremely difficult because it's like sowing salt in the middle of the sea." Tsukada's frankness perhaps resulted in his transfer on November 6, 1941. The Imperial General Headquarters (IGHQ) Confidential War Diary entry for that day described him as a first-rate theoretician, but not a politician.

The Japanese Navy swept the seas before it during the opening months of the Pacific War, and these victories did expand naval operations into the Bismarcks—and towards Australia to the south and Midway to the west. The Navy's victories also placed it in the driver's seat at home, and by March 1942 the Imperial Army found itself being dragged along by the Imperial Navy's insistence on the decisive battle.

Naval proposals for the so-called second stage of operations elicited lukewarm reactions, at best, from the Army. The Combined Fleet and the Navy Ministry favored attacking Australia to eliminate potential bases for an Allied counterattack and to ensure the collapse of Great Britain by isolating her from her allies. The Army leaders countered that the plan exceeded the limits of national power, particularly in terms of shipping and available military manpower. Similarly, the Army was unenthusiastic over Navy plans for the occupation of Ceylon because of the potential air threat a Japanese Army garrison on Ceylon would face from British India. As for the Navy's Hawaii operation, projected in October 1942, the Army withheld any comment. The sweeping FS Operation (Midway-Aleutians) received only left-handed endorsement, as the Army agreed to cooperate if the Navy were quite confident of success.

But then came Lt. Col. James Doolittle's B-25 raids against Japanese cities on April 18, 1942. Stung by their own inability to defend the skies over the homeland, embarrassed Army leaders "recognized the necessity to dispatch troops" to occupy Midway in order to extend Japan's defensive perimeter and to destroy the U.S. carrier forces, thereby precluding any future air threats to the home islands.

The Army then remained unaware of the magnitude of the Navy's reverse at Midway. On June 6, 1942, the Confidential War Diary recorded: "No report on offensive operations against the Aleutians and Midway. There seems to have been a decisive naval surface engagement near Midway. According to Naval Captain Onoda [Sujiro], the situation does not permit optimism." Nevertheless, based on incomplete strategic information, the Army did dispatch battalion-size landing parties to Rabaul and thence to the northern New Guinea coast to provide flank security for the burgeoning Japanese naval base at Rabaul.

After Midway, however, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directed Allied forces in the south and southwest Pacific to commence operations to seize Rabaul and re-establish Allied control of the Bismarck Archipelago. General MacArthur's forces in the Southwest Pacific would advance along the north New Guinea coast, while those of Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, replaced in November 1942 by Admiral William F. Halsey, pushed up the Solomon chain toward Rabaul. Guadalcanal was the first step.

The Japanese Navy's construction of an advanced air base on Guadalcanal provoked an unexpectedly quick reaction from the United States when, on August 7, 1942, the First Marine Division landed on Guadalcanal and began a grinding battle of attrition on land, sea, and in the air.

By the end of the war, all of Japan's once-vaunted carriers had been sunk by the Allies. Here, crewmembers of the sinking Zuikaku throw explosives over the side during the battle off Cape Engano on Oct. 25, 1944.

The Japanese General Staff's original estimates indicated that the American landings represented nothing more than a reconnaissance in force. The Army confidently dispatched a battalion-size force to evict the impudent Americans. Some 25,000 Japanese Army casualties later, the Americans remained in possession of the island. Moreover, the serious naval air losses at Midway and in the Solomons forced the Navy in August 1942 to request that the Army provide aerial reinforcements to the southwest Pacific front. Reluctantly the Army agreed to send its air units and the accompanying ground forces required to guarantee airfield security. The newly formed Eighth Area Army at Rabaul oversaw operations on New Guinea, while the 17th Army was responsible for the Solomons front. Overextended lines of communications and a shortage of shipping made resupply of these far-flung Army garrisons in the southwest Pacific the exact nightmare that pre-war Army officers had feared. The Army still lacked any clear strategic concept of operations, and it lost the strategic initiative following its repulses on Guadalcanal and the defeat of its Port Moresby expedition.

By early 1943, Japanese Army planners assiduously were searching for ways to reduce their commitments to the southwestern Pacific and to contract their overextended defensive perimeter. Behind a shorter, presumably more easily defensible perimeter, the Army expected to replace its aircraft losses and re-equip ground units for an eventual counterattack against the Allies. At the end of September 1943, IGHQ's new operational policy envisioned holding the so-called "absolute zone of national defense" while completing preparations for a new and stronger primary line of resistance farther to the rear. There the Army could reconstitute its battered air and ground units. The execution of this conception, however, required that the Japanese Army hold the September line for 12 months.

The Americans did not allow the Japanese the grace period they needed. The Sextant Conference of late 1943 directed that the main Allied effort be concentrated in the Pacific along twin avenues of advance through the Central Pacific—Gilberts, Marshalls, Marianas, Carolines, Palaus—and along the New Guinea coast to the southern Philippines. Sensing Japanese weakness evidenced by the virtual abandonment of the Truk naval base in early 1944, Admiral Chester Nimitz advanced his timetable for striking at the Marshalls and Carolines. Similarly, MacArthur accelerated the tempo of his operations in March 1944. These converging attacks penetrated the Japanese "absolute zone of national defense," and by late May 1944, elements of the U.S. 41st Infantry Division invaded Biak Island, while U.S. Marine and Army units assaulted the Japanese-held Marianas in June 1944.

Constant U.S. pressure against Japanese strategic outposts hindered Japanese Army leaders' attempts to reconstruct their shattered air and ground units. Replacements were rushed to the fighting fronts at the expense of strengthening the rear areas. Even if Japan had sufficient reserves to deflect American advances in the southwest and central Pacific, Japanese industry lacked the resource base and technological capability to mass-produce annually the 55,000 aircraft the Japanese Army and Navy demanded for successful prosecution of the war effort. In 1944 alone, Japan lost 7,000 front-line aircraft in combat and 12,000 total aircraft from all causes. Actual aircraft production was 17,000 to 18,000, which barely sufficed to replace losses. Experienced pilots, of course, could never be replaced.

By mid-1944 Japan had been at war for seven full years, had upwards of one million troops holding strategic rail lines and cities in China, and had begun to conscript previously deferred university students. The magnitude of Japan's manpower shortages was apparent. Furthermore, Japan in 1944 was a labor-intensive, not machine-intensive, war economy. While the United States was able to replace men with machines, especially for construction of island bases and airfields, the Japanese never had this

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advantage. Instead, they had to use valuable trained soldiers to assist in the construction of an inner defense perimeter. It is true that in certain cases, notably Iwo Jima and Okinawa, the Imperial Army prepared formidable defenses that inflicted heavy losses on the American attackers. These bastions, however, were the exception, not the rule, because the Japanese Army lacked the manpower and resources to build an inner defensive perimeter in only 12 months.

The fall of Saipan in July 1944 forced the Japanese high command once again to react to American strategic initiatives and redesign its basic strategic policies. Significantly, for the first time in the 32-month course of the Pacific War, both the Imperial Army and Navy concurred upon developing a decisive "battleground." While such a chimera had long provided the Navy the stuff of illusions, now the Army concluded that it, too, had to concentrate its forces for a decisive engagement with the Americans. The results of the latest Japanese planning appeared as the so-called "Sho-go" Operation.

"Sho-go" identified four areas where the decisive battle might occur. These were "Sho-1," the Philippine Islands; "Sho-2," Formosa and the Ryukyus; "Sho-3," Japanese home islands, except Hokkaido, and "Sho-4," Hokkaido. In August 1944 the Imperial Army activated the 14th Area Army in the Philippines, with the 35th Army under its control. Dissatisfied with Lt. Gen. Kuroda Shigenori's seemingly lackadaisical approach to training and preparations for the impending clash, the Army high command appointed General Yamashita Tomoyuki, the "Tiger of Malaya," as commander of the 14th Army in late September. A combination of Japanese reinforcements from Manchuria—such as the Eighth Infantry and Second Armored divisions—and the upgrading of independent mixed brigades—such as the 103rd and 105th—to divisions augmented defensive preparations in the islands.

Despite these major redeployments, the Japanese Imperial Army remained undecided about the locus of the strategic defense of the Philippines. Yamashita favored a main defense fought on Luzon in order to conserve his forces and to shorten his lines of communication. The Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Army, Field Marshal Count Terauchi Hisaichi, however, ordered Yamashita's main defensive effort at Leyte, thereby extending resupply lines and siphoning troops from the Luzon garrison. Yamashita protested, but he followed orders and reinforced Leyte—that island was transformed into the decisive battleground. Thus, Japanese Army strategy now reached the stage where the Army was prepared to risk all on one decisive land battle in the Pacific, a major change from the Army's original notion of a protracted war of attrition. Now the Japanese Army aimed to destroy, not exhaust, its American foes.

While the decision to reinforce and fight the main battle on Leyte extended the duration of that operation, it cost the Japanese perhaps 75,000 soldiers, 2,500 aircraft and 26 warships. After Japan's decisive defeat on Leyte, Yamashita could do little except mastermind a tenacious defense of Luzon that cost the American forces more than 60,000 casualties. Yamashita's forces were still operational when the Pacific War ended, but they were cornered and isolated in northern Luzon, where they posed no threat to American plans to use the Philippines as a staging area for the greatest invasion of all, the Japanese home islands.

Having lost the decisive battle, the Japanese Army reverted to a strategy of inflicting the maximum number of American casualties in order to convince the United States that a negotiated peace was preferable to continued severe losses as the Americans fought their way closer to the

The Rising Sun spreads its rays over the Pacific, 1931-42, as the Japanese armed forces sweep from one conquest to another, as depicted in this map. The dotted line represents the furthest reach of the high tide of conquest by the time of the Battle of Midway, June 1942.

Japanese home islands. The Army's difficulty was that it no longer fought the war from a far-away perimeter whose distance from the home islands provided security. War had come to Japan's doorstep with daily air raids, naval gunfire bombardment, and American troops ashore in Okinawa, a prefecture of Japan itself.

The Army, which had introduced suicide aircraft during the Philippines campaign, now expanded that tactic of desperation to create scores of aerial suicide units and used them extensively at Okinawa. Army units also continued to shift from Manchuria to the Japanese home islands in order to strengthen homeland defenses for the anticipated Allied invasion. Denuding ground forces in Manchuria exposed the strategic salient to Soviet attack. The Kwantung Army, in command of Japanese forces in Manchuria, conducted a mass mobilization in July 1945 and, on paper, organized 24 divisions and 14 brigades with 700,000 men. These were for the most part ill-equipped and usually untrained, although several units did fight well when the Soviets invaded Manchuria in August 1945. Ironically when the war with Japan's primary, prewar hypothetical opponent, the USSR, finally erupted, the Imperial Army defending Manchuria was merely a shadow of its once-powerful self. Its original units lay broken on Pacific islands stretching from Guadalcanal to Okinawa.

The course of the Pacific War unmasked the deficiency in the Japanese Army's strategic concept. The Army was capable of brillant individual operations, like the conquest of Malaya in 1941-42 or of the Philippines, but it formulated no comprehensive framework in which to translate those operational successes into strategic victory. Instead, pulled along by the Japanese Navy, the Army first overextended itself in the south Pacific and then had to reinforce failure, thereby reacting to American strategic offensives. Without a clear grasp of the overall aim of the Pacific War, the Japanese Army ultimately self-destructed. □

Dr. Edward J. Drea is Chief, Staff Support Branch, at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. Further readings: Eagle Against the Sun *by Ronald Spector or* The Role of the Japanese Army *by Fujiwara Akira and* Pearl Harbor as History, *edited by Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto.*

Advance To The Black Sea

In the Crimea, Nazi Germany's 11th Army broke off one siege of vital Sevastopol to deal with Soviet landings to the rear, only to resume the campaign against the Black Sea fortress later. Even for von Manstein's troops, the campaign was a costly ordeal.

By Neil Munro

Below the Ukraine, the Crimean Peninsula spills into the Black Sea like a blot of ink, with the port city—the storied city—of Sevastopol at the far western tip. Above, where the ink spill began, is the Perekop Isthmus, a thin bridge flanked on one side by the waters of the Black Sea and on the other by the impassable swamplands of the *Zivash*, or Lazy Sea.

Appearing at the far end of the narrow neck of land in September of 1941 were the forward elements of Nazi Germany's 11th Army, led by Colonel General Erich von Manstein, a *Wehrmacht* "star" who probably was best known as author of the brilliantly successful plan to attack France through the Ardennes the year before. As the southernmost hinge of the vast war machine that rolled into the Soviet Union in 1941, Manstein's army would divert from its march eastward to subdue the Crimea—and capture the vital naval fortress of Sevastopol.

The ungainly blot projecting into the Black Sea was well worth the attention of an entire army. In Soviet hands, it would remain an important naval base; it posed a threat to the Rumanian oilfields to the west that were integral to the German war effort, and it would be a base—supplied by the Soviet Black Sea Fleet—threatening the south flank of the German armies sweeping into lower Russia.

In German hands, Sevastopol and the Crimea would deny the Soviets all such advantages, restrict the operations of the Black Sea Fleet and greatly impress neutral Turkey to the south.

Sevastopol already was legendary as the focal point for a year-long siege in the Crimean War of the mid-19th century, and now, nearly 100 years later, it again was the goal of advancing armies. But the city lay at the bottom of the blot-like peninsula, and Manstein's first task was to seize the narrow Perekop Isthmus to the north and bring his forces safely across, into the widening Crimea itself. As elements of his 11th Army he had at his disposal the German 49th Mountain Corps; the 30th, the 42nd and the 54th Infantry Corps, plus the 3rd Rumanian Army.

The land bridge before him late in September 1941 ranged from five to only two miles in width, a natural defensive position strengthened with Soviet fortifications, coastal artillery and, somewhat unusually, command-detonated sea mines buried in the ground.

The German assault upon the Crimea began with naked advance across open ground that was swept by Soviet artillery and machine-gun fire. The Germans replied in kind, but added smoke to mask their men as much as possible. Casualties for the lead 50th and 73rd Infantry Divisions were heavy, while the Soviet defenders often fought back with a fury that was to mark the entire, bitter Crimean campaign to come.

The Soviet counterattacks, highly costly, surprised the Germans. As noted by one *Wehrmacht* onlooker, the Russians moved forward openly, "presenting themselves as if on a chessboard." Said the same observer: "Company after company moves slowly and steadily toward us, towards the certainty of death . . . Numberless brown corpses cover, a few minutes later, the meager grass, while others walk unsteadily towards our positions with raised hands."

Eventually the "Tartars ditch"—an ancient Tartar fortification—was taken, a breakthrough that forced the demoralized Soviets to retreat southwards to their next defensive line. But the Germans were unable to press their advantage, because three Soviet armies of 12 divisions had launched an attack on the northeastern flank of the 11th Army. The Soviet attack was defeated when General Paul von Kleist's Panzer group swept southwards down on the Soviets' rear. So it was only on October 18 that the Germans were able to attack the next Soviet defensive line at the south end of the isthmus, where it was only two miles wide, and split by three shallow swamps.

In the meantime, 11th Army had been reorganized—losing the 49th Mountain Corps, but being given the sole task of conquering the Crimea for the Third Reich.

To break through the two-mile front, and into the Crimea proper, Manstein assembled the three divisions of the 54th Corps—the 73rd, 46th, and 22nd—as a battering ram, with his 30 Corps in reserve. These troops not only would have to face the deep Soviet fortifications and artillery, but tanks and, for once, *Soviet* air superiority.

In September 1941, the National elements of Army Germania's 11th Army reached Dnepropetrovsk, on the River Dnepr, in the Ukraine on the USSR. So far, Hitler's PARTISANS had thwarted every Panzerkeil which met all operations took on terrible shape and dimensions.

The attack, launched with all the artillery that could be mustered, was against eight rifle and four cavalry divisions—about 80,000 to 90,000 men. For ten days the Germans bludgeoned their way slowly forward through the Soviet entrenchments, suffering such casualties that a divisional commander reported his regiments were at the end of their strength by the 25th. On such a narrow front, with perhaps some 150,000 men engaged over six miles, it is scarcely surprising that each side did such bloody execution. In the end, on the 29th, the Soviet defenders collapsed under yet another "final effort" by the exhausted German troops, and so the Soviets streamed away from the battlefield in disorganized retreat.

To pursue them, Manstein organized an ad-hoc column composed of motorized units from various infantry divisions. This column sped ahead of the German infantry regiments of 30 Corps and spearheaded the breaching of further Soviet defense lines. A pocket of three Soviet cavalry divisions was destroyed near Simferepol, while the small Parpach Peninsula was taken after a Soviet defense line was overrun. By November 16, all of the Crimea was in German hands except for the tensely waiting port of Sevastopol. In this successful operation, the Germans took about 110,000 prisoners, 800 guns and 270 tanks.

At the gates of Sevastopol itself, Manstein attempted to quickly sieze the city, but the disorganized defenders managed tohold off the equally disorganized Germans.

And now the Russian winter arrived to slow down each side's operations. The Germans were woefully unprepared—their men frozen, their weapons jammed, their aircraft could not take off, but most importantly, their supply locomotives burst their steam pipes. The wholesale failure of German locomotives dramatically cut the number of supply trains. Manstein reported that only one out of five locomotives was operating south of the Dnieper.

In the general chaos of that first Russian winter, Hitler authorized two offensives—Operation TYPHOON against Moscow, and the assault on Sevastopol. With only limited supplies reaching it, the 11th Army's buildup for the assault was slow.

For the Soviet garrison of Sevastopol, meanwhile, the situation appeared even more bleak. The garrison was mostly formed from fragmented units which had survived the retreat from Perekop, or of units recently evacuated from Odessa. However, in the sanctuary of the fortress, organization was somewhat restored. At this point the garrison consisted of about 52,000 men, 170 guns and 100 aircraft. But weapons, ammunition and food supplies all had to be smuggled into the port by the Soviet Black Sea Fleet. While the long nights of winter somewhat eased the task of reinforcing the fortress by sea, because the *Luftwaffe* was not able to interdict the incoming transport ships, some success against the Black Sea Fleet was achieved by German Stukas.

By early December Hitler's Operation TYPHOON had stalled outside Moscow, and the Soviets were on the offensive all along the Eastern Front. As part of this general Soviet offensive—which Stalin actually seemed to believe would win victory by summer—the southern wing of the Soviet Army was ordered to recapture the Crimean Peninsula. This task could only be carried out by amphibious landings launched by the Black Sea Fleet, because the garrison of Sevastopol was firmly bottled up.

The Soviet North Caucasus Command, which was responsible for the defense of the Crimea, decided to land

NOT THE SAME AS ONCE BEFORE

For a time during the German campaign against the great Black Sea naval base of Sevastopol in the winter of 1941-42, the defenders and residents of the city thought their ordeal had ended.

First, during December 1941, the advancing Germans pushed to within six miles of the city. The German offensive halted, however, with the amphibious landings the Soviets mounted on the Kerch Peninsula to the German rear, an operation mounted despite the wintry weather.

In the respite, lasting for a few months, Sevastopol's population returned from caves and other shelters to their homes and began repairs to the damage wrought before the Kerch landings. The expectation was that the Soviet troops to the east soon would liberate the entire Crimea—the diluted German forces at the city's gates would be driven off.

Instead, the offensive to the northeast was a disaster, and soon the German 11th Army was drawn up before the city at nearly full force. The German shelling then resumed in earnest.

Both before and after, however, the defenders and the citizens of Sevastopol responded in ways that inspired song, poetry and the stuff of legend. "The Five Sailors of Sevastopol" were five Black Sea navymen who threw themselves bodily under German tanks with hand grenades. In the city, underground factories turned out mines and hand grenades, clothing and footwear, while children learned their lessons in subterranean schools.

Two years later, after the Soviets recaptured their Black Sea port, Russian-born British journalist Alexander Werth (later to be author of the history, *Russia at War: 1941-1945*) visited Sevastopol.

The once-lively Crimean city, he found, was dead. "Even in the suburbs . . . there was hardly a house standing. The railway station was a mountain of rubble and twisted metal; on the last day the Germans were at [Sevastopol] . . . they ran an enormous goods train off the line into a ravine, where it lay smashed, its wheels in the air. Destruction, destruction everywhere."

Werth came across an inscription scratched into an old navy monument by the sea. It probably was written during "the last days of agony of July 1942," he decided.

"You [Sevastopol] are not the same as before, when people smiled at your beauty," it said. "Now everyone curses this spot, because it has caused so much sorrow. Among your ruins, in your lanes and streets, thousands and thousands of people lie, and no one is there to cover their rotting bones."

The streets of the newly liberated city were deserted, Werth found in 1944. The mayor explained that survivors living in the outskirts still looked upon the city proper as *verboten*. Werth walked the empty, shattered streets recalling the Crimean War of the 1850s and a fort, still visible across the bay, where a young Leo Tolstoy had been stationed.

Now, in 1944, proceeding to the Khersones Promonotory, where some 750 German SS men had fought to the last, Werth found the ground had been "ploughed up by thousands of shells and scorched by the fire of the *katyusha* rockets." The ground was littered with German equipage and "thousands of pieces of paper—photographs, snapshots, passports, maps, private letters." Floating in the surrounding bay waters were rafts and the bodies of men who had tried to escape.

on the Kerch Peninsula to the east by December 21, and then to use the peninsula as a base to build up an army capable of retaking the Crimea. However, the beginning of Manstein's attack on Sevastopol torpedoed that plan—the units earmarked for the Kerch landings had to be sent to bolster the fortress.

Since the port of Sevastopol had been the main base of Russian Black Sea fleets for more than 100 years, it was surrounded by several layers of forts. An inner ring of forts dating from the early 1800s circled the port, while the terrain dominating the port north and south of Severnaya Bay was occupied by more modern forts similar to those in the Maginot Line. Further artillery forts covered areas of the coastline to repel seaborne invaders, the most recent of whom were the British and the French in the Crimean War of the 1850s. In the wake of the 20th-century German invasion, however, the Soviets were unable to establish a new defense zone around the port of sufficient depth to stop the powerful German artillery from bombarding the entire fortress.

Manstein decided to attack the northern sector, where he hoped to sieze a commanding position over Severnaya Bay, and cut off the port from seaborne reinforcement and supply. This would so gravely weaken Sevastopol that it could easily be taken the next spring.

In the assault, his 50th and the 24th Infantry Divisions made little progress as they attacked westwards towards the head of Severnaya Bay. From the north, the 22nd and 132nd Divisions attacked southwards towards the bay, but they, too, only made slow progress as they struggled against the weather, their own exhaustion and the stubborn Soviet defenders.

Meanwhile, the Soviets rushed in seaborne reinforcements to the fortress under the cover of darkness—the 388th Rifle Division, the 79th independent Marine Brigade, and the 345th Rifle Brigade. These reinforcements were sent up to the north shore of the bay where the Russian horseless cavalry division was being pushed back. In the heavy fighting, ammunition ran low—that also had to be carried in on the decks of the fast destroyer *Tashkent*.

But the Soviets were not going to stand idly by while Sevastopol fought for its life. Since their troops initially meant for the Kerch landings had been sent to the fortress, new units had to be readied and prepared for their landings—landings to be launched under incredibly frigid wintry conditions.

A hodge-podge of Soviet ships—gunboats, fishing boats, motor boats, seiners and patrol craft—carrying the invasion troops left port in a Force Eight gale which subsided into "only" a Force Five by the time the craft arrived off the beaches north and east of Kerch. The soldiers were then carried close to shore by the smaller boats, leaving the infantry to finally *wade* ashore in minus-20 degree temperatures. All this took place at night—by dawn, about 5,000 infantry were aground in several landing beaches—1,500 men, three tanks and four guns each at Cape Zyuk and Cape Khoni, 500 men at Eltigen and 1,600 at Kamysh-Burun. These forces were largely without shelter, supplies, armor, heavy weapons or aircover—moreover, they would receive no reinforcements for several days, due to the foul weather.

The German 46th Division, left by Manstein at Kerch to defend against such landings, vigorously attacked and eliminated several of the beachheads, containing but not wiping out the Kerch landings. Conditions for both sides in these battles were truly terrible—but especially for the unsheltered Soviet soldiers as corpses froze into blocks of ice.

When Manstein learned of the Soviet landings, he had chosen to continue the assault on the Sevastopol fortress

TOP: Tough German infantry go into the assault. The attack upon the Crimea "began with naked advance across open ground that was swept by Soviet artillery and machine-gun fire. The Germans replied in kind, but added smoke to mask their men." ABOVE: The German infantry were well-armed, expertly trained, resilient in combat, highly motivated and among the best of any army throughout World War II.

while detaching some of his German units to bolster the defense of the exposed Parpach Peninsula and the large port of Feodosia to the east. He then pushed on with the assault on Sevastopol, and in yet another final effort, the emaciated units of the 16th Infantry Regiment managed to fight their way into the rubble of Fort Stalin. Just beyond Fort Stalin lay the German objective—the ridge over Severnaya Bay that would allow the Germans to command the port with their artillery.

But then a second Soviet seaborne invasion took place, at Feodosia on December 29. After a sharp fight with the small German garrison there, the Soviets disembarked from their warships, straight onto the piers, and quickly seized the port and adjacent beaches.

TOP: Colonel General (and later Field Marshal) Erich von Manstein commanded Germany's crack 11th Army in the Crimea. ABOVE: Among the several mammoth German artillery pieces engaged in the siege of the fortress at Sevastopol was "Thor"—a powerful, 24" mortar that threw a shell weighing more than 4,800 pounds.

The commander of the German 46th Division at Kerch, Count Hans von Sponeck, saw the danger to his exposed rear and rapidly began to force-march his division back towards Feodosia—he dismantled his headquarters radio immediately after notifying Manstein of the retreat, to ensure that no countermanding order could get through. This was direct disobedience to Manstein's command to stay and fight at Kerch, and Manstein was livid. Von Sponeck's decision was probably the correct one—most certainly from the perspective of the 46th Division's soldiers—but his retreat was actually the first significant case of disobedience in the *Wehrmacht* of World War II up to that point. As such, it was severely punished by denying any of the 46th's men honors or leave, as well as the court-martialing of von Sponeck. (Manstein and Hitler countermanded his resultant death sentence, but to little good, for von Sponeck was murdered by his guards after the failed July 20 bomb-plot of 1944.)

By December 31, the Soviets had two armies (the 44th and the 51st), composed of 40,000 men, 43 tanks, 246 guns and 330 trucks, landed in the Crimea—a very creditable achievement considering their unsuitable ships, the awful weather and the rush. The Soviets now controlled the Parpach Peninsula and were determined to use it to reconquer the Crimea.

However, the German defenses were quickly coalescing—the 46th abandoned all its heavy equipment and struggled back behind Feodosia, just avoiding the Soviet units advancing from the beaches. It was joined by the 213th Infantry Regiment, and some Rumanian units stiffened by ad hoc German cadres, who then all together formed a thin line sealing off the Parpach Peninsula from the rest of the Crimea.

Once Manstein realized the extent of the second wave of Soviet landings at Feodosia, he cancelled the attacks on Sevastopol—feeble as they were—so that by December 30 the German attempt to take the fortress had collapsed. The Germans even withdrew from the expensively bought advance positions at Fort Stalin and retreated back across the Belbek Valley.

The situation at Feodosia temporarily stabilized with the Soviets holding the Parpach Peninsula and the area around Feodosia. For whatever reason, they did not advance to threaten the vulnerable rear of the 11th Army, an event which Manstein feared. One Soviet attempt to open yet another new front in the Crimea involved the landing of a Soviet marine battalion at Evpatoria on January 6. However, the marines suffered heavy casualties in the assault and—according to the Soviet account—bad weather prevented the landing of the rest of the regiment. The end result was that the isolated battalion was wiped out by the German defenders.

Overestimating the endurance of his battered and frozen units, Manstein attacked Feodosia on January 15 with 3½ greatly weakened and exhausted German divisions, against perhaps eight Soviet rifle divisions. The initial offensive was successful, capturing Feodosia and 10,000 prisoners, as well as 177 guns, but the German infantrymen could go no farther, and the attack petered out in the freezing snow. Of this collapse, Manstein had little to say, except, "We realized that after everything the troops had gone through to date, it might cause very severe reverses to demand too much of them now."

Another Soviet landing, on January 16, sent the 226th Mountain Rifle Regiment into the Sudak Valley, an operation designed to cut the road between Sevastopol and Parpach. A swift German response to the slow Soviet landing pinned the regiment to the beach. Subsequent reinforcement with the 544th Regiment did not improve the position, and in the understated prose of the Soviet chroniclers: "the attack by the 44th and the 51st Armies did not develop completely, and the ... Regiments were isolated and destroyed."

On the Parpach Peninsula, both sides began building up their fortifications and their forces, with the Soviets bringing their reinforcements across the now-frozen straits at Kerch. Finally, after five weeks of relative calm, the Soviets launched their offensive to reconquer the Crimea, but gained only a few miles of salient. After a halt, the Soviets attacked again on March 13. After five days of combat, the German 42 Corps reported that it could withstand no more large attacks, as its units were too weakened. According to Manstein, the fighting was so severe that the three regiments of the 46th Division "had to beat off anything from ten to twenty-two attacks between them during the same three days."

However, the 11th Army had just received the brand-new 22nd Panzer Division as a reinforcement, and Manstein almost immediately used it to spearhead a counterattack. The attack was a disaster, for the 22nd Panzer

Division blundered through a mist into a large concentration of Soviet tanks and was punished so badly that it was taken out of the line for refitting.

A final Soviet offensive on April 6 was held off by the newly arrived 28th *Jäger* Division and fizzled out two days later with heavy losses for the Soviets. Thus, the front line solidified as each side built up its forces and fortification for the coming spring.

Before Manstein could turn his attention back to Sevastopol, he had to wipe out the Soviets on the Parpach Peninsula. By now, the Soviets had built up a tough system of fortifications manned by 17 infantry and two cavalry divisions, four armored and three rifle brigades. His attack on May 8 opened with infantry assaults on the northern salient and the southward section of the line—both supported by heavy artillery fire and air support. However, the northern attacks were just a diversion designed to tie down Soviet reserves, while the southern *Schwerpunkt* broke through. To enhance his deception, Manstein made sure there was heavy radio traffic and vehicle movement in the north.

By evening, the southern attacks had broken through—with the aid of a battalion landed behind Soviet lines in assault boats. Early on the 9th, Manstein committed the 22nd Panzer Division through the widening breach in the Soviet line. He also sent a motorized unit commanded by Colonel General Karl Albrecht Groddek directly eastward, with orders to disrupt the Soviet rear areas.

The inexperienced Soviet command was thrown into confusion. Its few reserves were kept in the north by the German deception efforts, allowing the southern breakthrough to grow even wider. Stukas pounded the rear areas, headquarters were bombed and cut off, retreating units became mixed with advancing reinforcements, *panzers* were reported everywhere, air support could not be had—and so chaos compounded with confusion to ensure defeat. By May 11, the northern coast of the peninsula had been reached by the 22nd Panzer Division, trapping eight infantry divisions. In Moscow, the Supreme High Command (STAVKA) saw the writing on the wall and ordered a withdrawal to a new defense line at Kerch, but by then the Soviet units were streaming back in confusion. The order did not get through to the 51st Army for another two days. Moreover, Group Groddek was already deep in the Soviet rear, constantly disrupting Soviet attempts to bring up reinforcements or to form a new defense line.

The Soviet rout was so total that Manstein destroyed the final Soviet pockets with artillery, while daylight evacuation efforts of the Soviet Navy were largely prevented by artillery and the ever-active Stukas. A certain commissar with the name of Leonid Brehznev was active in the evacuation, during which—according to Brezhnev's later publicists—three ships were sunk from under the future leader of the USSR. Sources estimate the total Soviet loss for this disaster was about 170,000 prisoners, along with most of their 3,500 guns and 350 tanks, against minimal casualties for the Germans.

The defenders of Sevastopol, meanwhile, had been busy during the months since December, even as they saw their saviors at Parpach approach—especially as they saw them destroyed. The long winter nights had allowed reinforcements and ammunition to be brought in by merchant ships and on the decks of fast cruisers, such as the *Krasnyi Kayz*, the *Kharkov* and the *Krasnyi Krim*—all of which found the journey increasingly dangerous as the nights shortened. The concrete forts with their steel cupolas and underground passages were expanded by extensive trenchworks, new bunkers, minefields, concertina wire. They were backed up by entrenched artillery guns and *katyusha* rocket launchers—all skillfully camouflaged. The defenders were increased to seven rifle divisions and one of dismounted cavalry, plus three marine brigades, organized as the Coast Army.

TOP: The Axis assault against the Soviet Union in 1941 made many careers and broke others within the Russian high command. Both Leonid Brehznev and Nikita Khrushchev later became heads of the Soviet state, while Marshal Semyon Budenny (center), a popular cavalry general of the Russian Civil War era, was forced to retire. ABOVE: Engaging the enemy at Sevastopol are these hardy Soviet sailors.

Before attacking the fortress, Manstein first had to restore the defenses in Kerch and Parpach—for this task, he left behind some Rumanian units and the 46th German Infantry Division.

The rest of the German 11th Army gathered around Sevastopol, except for the 22nd Panzer Division, which was taken away by the Southern Army Group for the coming summer offensive into the Caucasus.

The greatest German strength lay in the immense amounts of artillery available to the 11th Army.

The northern area of the fortress above Severnaya Bay was to be battered by 56 super-heavy, heavy and medium batteries, supported by 41 light and 18 mortar batteries, while the southern sector was to receive the attention of 25 heavy and medium, 25 light and 6 mortar batteries. These batteries were supported by the flak regiments of 8th Air

Corps with its famous 88mm antiaircraft guns, which also were very effective in a direct-fire role.

Included among the artillery guns were the exotic 16.8-inch Gamma mortar, throwing a shell of 2,000 pounds, and the 24-inch mortar "Thor," throwing a shell weighing 4,800 pounds. However powerful these grotesque monsters were, they were dwarfed by "Dora"—the biggest gun ever produced. This had a barrel 107 feet long and fired three 31.4 (12,000 lbs)-inch shells per hour, to a distance of 29 miles. In this one battle where it was actually used, "Dora" managed to inflict significant damage on the Soviets and destroy ammunition dumps some 90 feet underground.

The 8th Air Corps contributed some 600 aircraft, including 300 bombers and 120 fighters, which bombed and strafed the fortress mercilessly, denying any peace to the defenders. These attacks were bravely—and fruitlessly—resisted by the small Soviet air units based at Sevastopol. They soon were bombarded out of existence. JU 88s and torpedo-carrying He 111s largely neutralized the Black Sea Fleet by day. At night, the Germans were unable to stop Soviet ships dashing into Sevastopol to unload reinforcement and ammunition—and at the same time using their ship's guns to add to the defensive bombardment.

The German assault forces were divided into two corps. The 54th Corps—with the 22nd, 24th, 50th and 132nd Divisions, and the 213rd Infantry Regiment, plus two battalions of assault guns—was to attack in the north, aiming for the east end of Severnaya Bay. Once it was taken, those units were to attack and take the various concrete forts from the rear.

The attack in the south was to be delivered by the 30th Corps—with the 72nd and 170th Infantry divisions, plus the 28th Jäger Division. These troops did not face many concrete forts, but rather extensive Soviet entrenchments hidden under the dense brush that covered the broken and hilly terrain. Once they forced the Soviets back, they would face the inner ring of older forts around the port of Sevastopol, but by then they were expected to receive the support of 54th Corps and its artillery.

In-between these two corps, the Rumanian Mountain Corps was placed to hold the German ring.

H-hour was preceded by five days of intense artillery fire, initially aimed at Soviet reserves and supplies, and then concentrating observed fire on Soviet artillery batteries. Meanwhile, the *Luftwaffe* mercilessly bombed the port, ammo dumps, supply lines and reserves—with each aircraft making several sorties a day. The Soviets, prone to exaggerate such things, say that 17,141 sorties were made against the fortress in June, dropping some 45,000 bombs. The Soviets also assert that some 126,000 large shells were expended on the fortress.

On June 7, the Germans rushed across no-man's land. In this battle, the tactics their fathers had developed in World War I were what was required—short dashes by small groups of heavily armed men, covered by intense machine-gun and direct artillery fire on any known Soviet position.

In the north, the Germans, after leaping across the Belbek Valley, ground slowly forward over the blasted terrain, toward concrete forts with names like Stalin, GPU, Volga and Siberia. Progress was slow, and casualties were high—with regiments being cut down to battalions and battalions down to companies. In these bitter battles, it was rare for the Soviet positions to be easily given up by the desperate defenders of the *Rondina* (Motherland). Bunkers were captured with only two or three survivors, surrounded by barricades of corpses and the litter of spent ammunition cartridges. In the south, the outlying Soviet trenches had to be taken before such hill strongpoints as Sugerloaf or Windmill Hill. Although progress over the broken ground was slower than in the north, it was considerably less bloody.

By the 17th, the outer ring of Soviet forts in the north had been taken—the defenders had been gouged out of their underground galleries with flamethrowers, satchel charges and toxic smoke. Fort Stalin and its series of stubbornly defended underground chambers had been finally captured by the 16th Infantry Regiment, which had only managed to reach the same fort's perimeter in December. In the south, 30th Corps had made progress toward the main Soviet positions on the Zapun hills. But the casualties in the increasingly bloody slugging match had been so heavy that the 132nd Division was pulled out of the line—and Manstein asked Berlin to send him another division as reinforcements.

In Sevastopol, the situation for the defenders was nightmarish. After 10 days, ammunition and reserves were running low, while the wounded could not be attended. The relentless bombardment, and the continual deafening noise, were driving the defenders and the hapless civilians deeper into crowded, dark and ill-ventilated underground caverns. Rear-area squads were drafting anyone who was old enough to fire a rifle and sending them up to face the pitiless field-gray attackers. Desperately needed ammunition and reinforcements were sneaked into Sevastopol aboard fast cruisers or small submarines, which on departure would try to evacuate what wounded and civilians they could to safety.

Because of the desperate Soviet resistance, Manstein was forced to rapidly shift the direction of his attacks. He thus avoided the main enemy units while nonetheless seizing important positions.

Eventually, the final forts of the north cape overlooking the Black Sea were seized by the 24th Division—the last desperate Soviet defenders were burnt out of their caverns with flame and smoke. Along the northern bayshore, there were many deep underground galleries driven into the cliff-side by the Soviets, some of whom blew themselves and their occupants to pieces rather than surrender. Other burrows had to be cracked open by men of the 22nd Division and their supporting assault guns.

By the time the Germans had blasted the northern sector clear of Soviet defenders, 30 Corps in the south had pushed forward to the Soviet positions near the Zapun heights. Here, too, trapped Soviet defenders blew themselves up rather than surrender—in one instance some Soviets set off ammunition stocks in a series of tunnels sheltering hundreds of wounded and refugees, burying them all under tons of rubble.

The question now facing Manstein was how to crack the remaining Soviet defenses—around the port and South along the Zapun heights—as speedily as possible. He decided upon an amphibious attack across Severnaya Bay with 54th Corps—a plan that he justified to his staff by saying that the great strength of the Soviet defense along the south bay cliffs would make the Soviet defenders overconfident and ensure the attack would be a surprise.

In the early hours of June 29, the two strongest units in the 54th Corps, the 22nd and the 24th Divisions, frantically paddled their way across the bay in the relative quiet before dawn. They were silently covered by artillery under orders to remain still until the assault boats were fired upon. But the Soviets had drawn off men from this sector to fill their lines elsewhere—the German success was complete. By dawn, the German infantry were well inland, behind the last Soviet positions on the Zapun heights.

From this point on, the Soviet collapse was speedy. The divisions of the 54th Corps reunited as they pushed toward the city. Farther south, the 28th *Jäger* and the

Like the 1940 blitzkrieg campaigns against the Low Countries and France, Germany's vaunted panzer units in Russia encircled huge numbers of dazed enemy troops. And yet, as each new Russian village was conquered, the seemingly endless Soviet horizon continued to yawn before the victorious German tankers, as in this wartime photo.

72nd Infantry simulated a broad attack on the Zapun heights, while the 170th concentrated the corps' assault guns, artillery and 88s to break through east of the Fedyukiny heights. The 28th rapidly followed up this breakthrough, seizing the British Cemetery by July 1, and breaking open the last Soviet lines. Rather than assault the city, Manstein ordered that it be bombarded until its defenders could not stand up.

As the Soviet defense fell apart, desperate attempts were made by the defenders to break out. "Whole masses of them rushed at our lines, their arms linked to prevent anyone from hanging back," wrote Manstein later. "At their head, urging them on, there were often women and girls of the Communist Youth, themselves bearing arms." Inevitably, the German machine guns mowed them down—women, children and soldiers, leaving no one alive to betray the Motherland by surrendering.

The tragedy was soon over, and the Germans made their way through the last Soviet defense lines at the Khersones Promonotory, where they found some 30,000 Soviets waiting to be picked up by the Black Sea Fleet—which never made it past the circling Stukas. Altogether, some 90,000 prisoners were taken from the blasted fortress of Sevastopol, along with 600 artillery guns. For these prisoners, the future was black—if they survived Hitler's concentration camps, they would probably perish in Stalin's post war camps built especially for those who had "traitorously" surrendered to the fascist enemy.

It had been a long, bitterly fought campaign—from one summer's end to another's beginning. The Third Reich considered the Crimea a great triumph, costly though it was. Manstein was advanced to field marshal in rank, and his soldiers were given special Crimean-campaign shields to wear on their uniforms. For the Soviets, the fall of Sevastopol was both a military disaster and yet a moral victory. Like Leningrad, Sevastopol had held out for so long. Unlike Leningrad, it eventually did fall, but in the meantime, it fostered tales of heroism, patriotism, and fortitude that were inspiration for all of Soviet Russia. Here was "vindication" of Socialist Man and Woman, quite ignoring the poor Soviet generalship that resulted in demotions and other quiet punishments.

Such is the nature of war, however, that the campaign of Sevastopol and the Crimea remained to be fought all over again two years after the first one ended. In this instance, it required but one month for the Russians to accomplish what had taken the Germans the better part of a year—the capture of the Crimea and of Sevastopol. And this time, it was the Germans who retreated to the Khersones Promonotory at the battle's end, to wait futilely for a seaborne evacuation that never came. □

Neil Munro is a free-lance writer based in Virginia. Recommended as further readings: Lost Victories *by Eric von Manstein;* The Road to Stalingrad *by John Erickson;* Russia at War: 1941-1945 *by Alexander Werth.*

Reprisal Between Friends

Those planes flashing silver-like in the sky above Gibraltar and dropping sticks of bombs on the British naval base were neither German nor Italian . . . but French.

By Peter C. Smith

Aboard a harbor-bound battlecruiser under surprise air attack early in the war, a young midshipman was mesmerized by the chilling sight that gripped him when he looked up.

"The most striking is when a stick of bombs starts to fall out in the bay and advances majestically towards the ship," he later wrote. "As it approaches, the whistle of falling bombs becomes louder and the feeling that the next one is destined for you and only you becomes more and more insistent."

In seconds, a cloud of dust and debris was "thrown up" from behind the catapult deck, he also noted, "and you wonder if we have been hit."

Caught unprepared by the raiders, his warship was getting up steam for a run to sea, away from the close confines of the harbor under attack. The bombers came in waves, arriving over their target area for an hour and 15 minutes, from 1 p.m. to 2:15.

Below, hardly anyone was counting the minutes with any precision. All they knew was that they were under attack, their enemy a startling one.

"All this time the 4.5s are firing in barrage broadside. The heat and smoke and noise would, in cold blood, be overpowering, but in a raid they pass almost unnoticed save for their reassuring influence."

Finally, the British midshipman's battlecruiser, HMS *Renown*, was moving. "A few minutes before the all-clear was sounded, we started to prepare for sea, and we were underway at 1530 (3:30). We turned eastward, sped on our way by loud cheers from the soldiers on the jetty."

In the meantime, a British destroyer patrolling nearby received an odd signal from another Royal Navy ship: "When we left, our late Allies had been bombing Gibraltar for two hours." The oddity was that the aircraft winging their way back to bases in North Africa after their attack on Gibraltar were French.

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As a crown colony of the British, the great "Rock" at the western end of the Mediterranean had withstood furious siege by combined French and Spanish forces during and after the years of the American Revolution—from 1879 to 1883. Before its acquisition by the British in 1704, it had undergone nearly a dozen sieges and several times changed hands as the goal both of the Spanish and their traditional Moorish enemies from North Africa.

Thus, Gibraltar as a strategic fortress counted its history of warfare back to the first Moorish incursions on the Iberian Peninsula, before the year 1000.

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Hitler's invasion and Malta's role. Once British bastions controlling vital Mediterranean sea routes, Malta and Crete suffered massive attacks by bombers of Hermann Göring's Luftwaffe in the Mediterranean theater. Crete fell in May 1941, but Malta withstood the onslaught. INSET: "Remember Crete," shouts this German propaganda poster that shows a drowning French sailor with his country's flag.

TOP: Classified until as late as 1978, the information contained in this map shows why—aside from the vital fact of geographic location—the fortress of Gibraltar was so important a link in the Allied defensive system and offensive capability in the Mediterranean: the 10-mile-long, below-ground ammo dumps, hospitals and waterworks, protected by above-surface installations with the port at left for British Royal Navy warships. ABOVE: The massiveness of Gibraltar's underground defensive caverns had to be seen to be believed, such as this chamber with a steam shovel and dump truck inside! Some caverns were more than 300 feet long and 50 wide.

Malta, supply their forces in Egypt, have access to the Suez Canal as a shortened link to India and the Far East . . . a host of strategic considerations, really. Among them, too, was the prevention of Mediterranean dominance by the Italian Navy. Ultimately, Gibraltar would be a vital springboard for the first Allied steps to victory, the North African landings of late 1942.

But first, during the dark days from June 1940 to October 1942, the Rock stood in proud isolation. The greatest threat came in the autumn of 1940 when Hitler drew up detailed plans for its conquest, Operation FELIX. Specially trained units with siege guns and hollow charges, paratroops and crack Stuka dive-bombing units were to sweep down across Spain with Franco's blessing and take the Rock. Churchill drew up emergency plans to seize the Spanish Canary Islands as an alternative base should this occur, but they would have been a poor substitute. Had Gibraltar been taken, the fall of Malta surely would have soon followed.

Before the dominoes could fall into place for Hitler, however, Generalissimo Francisco Franco balked, apparently fearful of the Royal Navy's still-potent sting. The July bombardment of French warships at Mers-el-Kébir near Oran, Algeria, by the British Force H based at Gibraltar reinforced Franco's fears, and he drew back from the brink of participation as an added ally for Hitler. The controversial British attack on French warships thus may have saved the Rock from German assault, but it also led to the war's only major bombing of the fortress—not by German Stukas or Italian Savoias, but by the Army and Navy aircraft of Britain's former friend, France.

Understandably there was great anger in France at Britain's action against her fleet and the loss of so many French lives. The prevention of a German take-over of the French fleet was crucial to Britain in those desperate days. But the French could not easily understand this point which is, even now, the subject of fierce controversy. Rightly or wrongly, the deed was done. Although the Vichy regime drew back from outright war, the French Navy, and especially its mercurial chief, Admiral Francois Darlan, who already harbored a great hatred for Britain and the British, could not conceal a simmering resentment that threatened to boil over at any moment.

The situation was tense and nowhere more so than in the Straits of Gibraltar where French convoys and warships were a continual source of friction as they passed through the British blockade at the mouth of the Mediterranean. It only needed a spark to set off an explosion. And that spark came when the Free French invaded Dakar with British support. The invasion failed with humiliating losses, but it proved the last straw for the enraged Vichy leaders, who sought retaliation. The added casualties suffered by the French during Operation MENACE at Dakar, September 23 to 25, lit the tinder-box. Gibraltar came under fire for the first time since it was besieged by the Spanish and the French from 1779 to 1783 as an outgrowth of the American Revolution.

It was not generally known until recently, but the Vichy government knew that Free French General Charles de Gaulle's expedition was on its way to Dakar three weeks before it arrived at the strategic air and naval base in French West Africa (Senegal today). The French Admiralty signalled Dakar as early as September 8 to expect the landings scheduled for September 23. Thus, there was time to prepare, and the assault—aided by British warships—was in fact turned back by the Vichy French.

When the attack commenced on the day predicted, however, Vichy commanders in North Africa were ordered to take immediate air reprisals against Gibraltar

An unusual aerial view of the towering Rock of Gibraltar, Britain's guardian of the western gateway to the Mediterranean to the south of Franco's Falangist Spain in 1940. Would the Spanish generalissimo and Hitler conspire to launch a joint invasion of the island fortress with its British naval facilities and underground stores?

itself. Among the aircraft available for that task were three Navy squadrons of land-based medium bombers—2B, 3B, and 4B, which already had conducted 28 reconnaissance missions over Gibraltar to photograph and pinpoint potential targets. The three squadrons were equipped with American-built Glenn-Martin 167F twin-engined bombers based at Port Lyautey and Tafaraqui, respectively.

The Vichy Army's air arm was a much larger force that could call upon at least eight air groups. The bulk of Vichy air power in North Africa was concentrated at Meknes, Morroco. Groups I and II/23 had 14 Liore-et-Olivier LeO 45 bombers here; I/19 and 2/61 had 12 American-built Douglas A-20F twin-engined bombers each at the same base. Then, at Mediouna, were Groups 1 and 2/32, also with a dozen Douglas bombers each. Farther to the east, at Oran, close to the scene of the carnage wrought by the British naval attack at Mers-el-Kébir, were Groups I/II and I/25, with twelve and nine LeO 45's apiece. Not all these aircraft were operational, of course, but the French commander could call on more than 80 medium bombers to carry out his orders. There were also large numbers of Curtiss Hawk 75, Dwoitine 510 and Moraine single-engined fighter aircraft to provide heavy escort.

In the event, such a strong fighter protection proved unnecessary. The total air strength available to Gibraltar's defenders on September 24, 1940, consisted of three Fairey Swordfish biplanes fitted with floats for short-range reconnaissance and target-towing and a few equally obsolete Saro London flying boats based at the former coaling depot in the harbor itself. Not a single fighter opposed any enemy except when the aircraft-carrier *Ark Royal* of Force H happened to be in the harbor—but she was off Dakar. The fleet's powerful complement of antiaircraft guns would have given added protection, but in the fleet's absence AA defense rested entirely with the Army guns mounted about the Rock, and these were sparse enough. They were mainly old 3-inch guns dating back to the First World War, although a few 40mm Bofors light automatic weapons had arrived. They had proved sufficient to knock down one of the Italian long-range "snoopers," a Savoia-Marchetti SM82, that previously had been the only enemy aerial presence over Gibraltar.

The gunners were undergoing intensive training. A Type 78Z RDF radar set had been installed by the Royal Navy at Spyglass Hill on Gibraltar a month or so earlier and was still undergoing tests. Its reception had been marred by

Important factors in the Mediterranean strategy of the Royal Navy were its aircraft carriers (from left) Victorious, Indomitable *and* Eagle, *seen here on convoy duty from Gibraltar. On the flight deck of the* Victorious *(foreground) can be seen Sea Hurricane and double-winged Albacore planes.*

strong land echoes and its range extended no more than 40 to 50 miles.

Only a limited naval force was present at the Rock at this date. The flagship of Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville, commanding Force H, the battlecruiser *Renown*, had just returned from a fruitless patrol off Casablanca, and, apart from nine destroyers (some in dockyard refitting, others on patrol in the straits) and 12 trawlers, the harbor was deserted, the bulk of his command being involved at Dakar itself. The commander-in-chief ashore was Admiral Sir Dudley North, with his headquarters located at the Tower in the dockyard.

For the attack of September 24, the Vichy Army assembled 18 LeO 45s and 27 Douglas bombers, while the Navy gathered 19 Glenn Martin bombers from *Escadrilles Marine* 2B, 3B, 2AB and 4AB. This makes a total of 64 aircraft. As fighter escort, 12 Dewoitine 520s of 2/3 *Groupe* based at Maison-Blanche flew into Mediouna and co-operated with 12 Curtiss Hawks of 2/5 from Casablanca and 12 of the same type from 1/5 based at Rabat, 36 fighters in all.

The objectives of this force were clearly laid out as the bombing of Gibraltar, fort and installations, with the exclusion of the town area and Spanish territory. The only airfield at the Rock was the old racecourse, located on the neck of land joining the Rock to the mainland and hard up against the Spanish neutral zone, so great care had to be made in attacking this target. The main approach and plan of attack had long been prepared; detailed instruction had been issued on August 31. The Army bomb loads carried were mainly 1,000 lb., 400 lb., and 200 lb. weapons, totalling 41 tons. The Navy aircraft taking part brought this total up to 45 tons.

The French aircraft took off in increments that would arrive over the target area in continuous waves covering a period of one-and-a-quarter hours' duration. They found the Rock covered with light cloud extending to the southeast, which partly obscured the target, but they were all able to deliver their bomb loads nonetheless. Their times of arrival over Gibraltar ranged from 1 p.m. to 2:15.

The British flak was brisk in its response, principal fire coming from the harbor area and the South Mole, but of course there was no fighter opposition whatsoever. The French were able to make a relatively undisturbed attack. They were surprised to find a prime target in *Renown*, which they had thought was at Dakar.

Two LeO 45s, meanwhile, had aborted the mission before reaching the target, one with spark plug problems in the engines, the other with oil leaks and siphonage problems, while a Douglas turned back to Rabat with mechanical trouble. The rest of the French planes carried out the attack without loss. Two were slightly damaged. A Douglas was hit by AA splinters which caused oil leaks, but landed back at Port Lyautey safely. Another Douglas from the same unit made a bad landing at Mediouna and was a write-off. But these were the only casualties, and there were no men killed or wounded. The bombs hit the British South Arsenal, the South Mole and various gun batteries. Numerous fires were also reported from parts of the North Arsenal.

The Navy pilots were the more bitter since they had comrades who had been slaughtered by the British fleet to avenge. All the same, their orders stressed that they were to ". . . avoid at all costs hitting the town." Six Navy aircraft in three sections of two took off from Port Lyau-

ALLIES AS BELLIGERENTS

In a war often marked by paradox, not only did Soviet Russia originally join with Hitler in attacking Poland, but the British, in July of 1940, attacked elements of the French fleet moored at Mers-el-Kébir near Oran in North Africa.

With the fall of British ally France in June, some French warships had escaped the German onslaught and found sanctuary in British waters, among them a pair of battleships, seven submarines and a handful of destroyers, torpedo boats and gunboats. Still left at dangerously loose ends—from the British point of view—were major warships such as *Jean-Bart; Richelieu; Dunkerque; Strasbourg; Bretagne,* and *Provence* all in North African waters.

Even before the official capitulation of France on June 22, Prime Minister Winston Churchill had ordered the creation of a special Royal Navy squadron at Gibraltar, Force H, to keep an eye on the French warships. Force H had as its nucleus two battleships, the battlecruiser *Renown* and the aircraft carrier *Royal Ark.*

In the confusion attending the Franco-German armistice providing for German occupation of northern France and nominal control of France's southern half by the new Vichy regime, Churchill had absolutely no desire to see the warships fall into German hands. The Germans, for their part, didn't want to see them join the British fleet.

It was Churchill who acted first, and not without controversy among his own subordinates.

Under the operational codename of CATAPULT, Force H from Gibraltar attacked French warships moored at Mers-el-Kébir, with the French clearly reluctant to return fire. In short order, the damaged *Dunkerque* was forced to anchor at the bay entrance to the sea, *Provence* ran aground, and the old *Bretagne* capsized, with 977 crewmen lost. The *Strasbourg* escaped to sea, but the attack resumed the next day with torpedo bombers from the *Royal Ark* striking at the wounded *Dunkerque.* She wasn't sunk, but the French lost

tey, and five in sections of two and one single aircraft followed them from the same airfield. They approached the Rock from the south southwest at an altitude of 14,000 feet, dropping their bombs in a single pass and peeling off to right and left after each attack. Squadron 3B reported three bombs fell close to the quays and nine fell on the North Arsenal and the docks. Squadron 2B stated all its bombs fell in the area of the arsenal and docks, but that the smoke from the previous explosions obscured the target area.

What was it like on the receiving end? Radar gave the British some warning, and French retaliation was not completely unexpected. Nonetheless, Somerville seems to have been caught napping. His battlecruiser was a vulnerable target while lying stationary alongside the mole when the first French aircraft appeared, although her large AA battery of 20 4.5-inch guns was fully manned and constituted the most effective defense of all. A "Levanter" wind had been blowing since just after midday, sweeping broken cloud over the port at heights of 10,000-12,000 feet, but this only served to hide the bombers and make accurate gunfire difficult. Those ashore counted some 20 separate waves with 150 bombs being dropped, 12 falling in the dockyard area and 20 in the harbor itself, with 55 landing ashore. Among the victims was Admiral North's secretary. No less than 75 bombs, however, landed way out in the bay, far from any significant target.

The British midshipman who later noted the mesmerizing sight of bombs falling toward him in advancing sticks was aboard the *Renown*, which wasted no time attempting a run for the open sea. As his ship built up the necessary steam, he also noted, "The sound of a plane diving out of the sun was another which made us wonder whether or not it would be *Renown's* turn next."

Driven out of her own base, Force H's flagship then spent the next two days cruising up and down off the Spanish coast. The only major warship left outside drydock at Gibraltar was the destroyer *Firedrake*, which had been out on patrol and was relieved by the destroyer *Wrestler* with that ironic signal: "When we left, our late allies had been bombing Gibraltar for two hours."

The British Royal Navy was the vital lifeline to both embattled Malta and Gibraltar, and their resupply convoys faced constant aerial bombardment from Axis squadrons. Here, Rear Admiral Harold Burrough (left) talks with Captain Harold Drew of the HMS cruiser Manchester.

Ashore at the Rock later on September 24, the speculation was that French honor now was satisifief and that it was all over. But this was far from the case.

Flying conditions the next day were good, and the French mounted an even larger effort, with the various waves time to arrive over the target a little later than the first attack. This time, 83 bombers took off, and 80 actually delivered their bombloads over Gibraltar. The route, targets and instructions remained the same, but this time with no fighter cover.

Army *Groupes* I and II/23 put 11 LeO 45s into the air this day from Meknes and, again from the same base, I/19 sent out nine and 2/61, 11 Douglas A-20F's. I and II/32 dispatched 10 and seven Douglas, respectively, from Mediouna, while from Oran I/25 and I/II sent out nine and six LeO 45s, respectively. Total tonnage of bombs carried was 56.

Three aircraft aborted before the attack—a Douglas from I/32 turned back with carburetor trouble, another Douglas from I/19 turned back with motor vibration and a LeO 45 from I/II suffered from mechanical trouble.

The French Navy's contribution to this day's sorties consisted of 12 Glenn Martins from 2B and 3B at Port Lyautey and eight more from 2AB and 4AB from Tafa-

another 150 men, for a total over the two days of 1,297 killed.

In the eastern Mediterranean, meanwhile, informal French and British agreement spared another French naval squadron, this one headed by the battleship *Lorraine*. The ships were to be moored in the harbor of Alexandria, Egypt, and demobilized. But the Royal Navy also attacked the *Richelieu* at Dakar, and would have assaulted more French warships in the Antilles, but for intervention by the Americans.

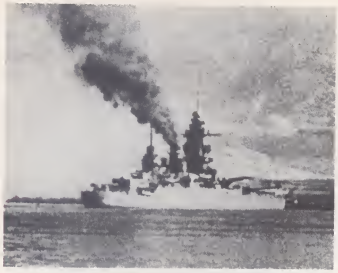
In the bitter aftermath of the British actions (which included seizing the French warships in British ports), the remainder of the French fleet returned to Toulon in southern France, where the ships were scuttled in November 1942.

Why did Churchill embark upon such a controversial course? He later said the series of British actions against the French warships showed how easily the Germans themselves "could have taken possession of any French warships lying in ports which they controlled."

Others have pointed out that the Germans did not have such "control" in every instance, however. It has been suggested that what Churchill really sought in the dark hour after Hitler's victories on the Continent was to show Britain's determination to fight on, alone if necessary.

Churchill, himself, later wrote: "Here was this Britain which so many had counted down and out, which strangers had supposed to be quivering on the brink of surrender to the mighty power arrayed against her, striking ruthlessly at her dearest friends of yesterday and securing for a while to herself the undisputed command of the sea. It was made plain that the British War Cabinet feared nothing and would stop at nothing. This was true."

Charles de Gaulle expressed his deep pain, but pointed out transcending objectives. "In spite of the pain and anger into which I and my companions were plunged by the tragedy at Mers-el-Kébir, by the behaviour of the British and by the way they gloried in it, I considered that the saving of France ranked above everything, even above the fate of her ships, and that our duty was still to go on with the fight."



TOP: The tragic—but necessary—British Royal Navy attack upon the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir on July 3, 1940, denied the former ally's warships to the Nazis, but inflamed popular feeling against England. Here, the Strasbourg escapes. MIDDLE: French BD7 at Marrakesh airfield. Other French aircraft involved included the Leo 45 and Glenn Martin 167F Navy bombers. ABOVE: The Italian Royal Air Force, too, bombed the Brits, with aircraft such as this squadron of Savoia-Marchetti bombers.

raqui. The Port Lyautey contingent left in two groups, the 12 bombers flying in pairs, with the commander of 3B leading at a higher altitude. They approached at an altitude of 14,000 feet from the southwest again.

Arrival over Gibraltar was timed to range from 3 p.m. to 4:15.

This time the British AA defenses had much improved, at least according to French records. Adjustments had been made and no less than 13 of the bombers were hit by flak splinters. More than that, this time there were casualties. One LeO 45 was hit over the target by shellfire and crashed into the sea, killing its entire crew. A second was badly damaged and crashed on landing at Nemours, also killing its crew. The French reported numerous hits on the arsenal, the drydocks and gun batteries on the Rock. But in truth damage was slight once more, and many bombs fell wide of the target.

Again the Navy's attack was the more determined. Navy crews reported hits on the arsenal and dockyards and a large explosion from one of the fortresses. Three of their bombers had flak-splinter damage to their fuselages, but none was lost. Their bombs raised the total dropped on the 25th to 60 tons.

British journalist A.D. Divine aboard the destroyer *Firedrake*, later described the attacks this day in detail, even if wartime propaganda may have tinged his account with bias and some wild speculation on the losses inflicted on the raiders.

Almost at the warning came the attack itself, it seems. "There were three planes overhead now, high sailing in the cloud. They had come in from the southwest, coming through the cloud almost above the Rock.

"The battery to the south of them started up: the battery to the north, Bofors guns, the guns on Europa Point, the guns on the flats of the isthmus. The air was pock-marked with the fleecy burst of ack-ack shells, unsteady about them with the shock of the discharges, with the answering clamorous echoes from the Rock.

"And then across their fire and the deep staccato anger of the Rock, they heard that noise they had grown to know so well in Norway—the shrill descending whistle of the bombs. The first stick hit in the sea outside the harbor. The old familiar fountains roared towards the sky."

Casualties ashore were again light, while damage was restricted to houses hit at Roscia Bay by bombs aimed at the dockyard, close to the Civil Hospital, and at Europa Point and the Alameda Gardens. The only real casualty was the 550-ton anti-submarine trawler, *Stella Sirius*. Divine described her loss.

"One [French] plane came down with a brilliant run in and loosed a stick aimed apparently either at the Tower or at *Firedrake* herself. They saw the bombs coming, dropping in the long easy curve of bomb flight. Those [British] who were not working the hot gun lay down along the decks. There was no safety for them anywhere. The bombs fell in a line across the harbor, vast splashes like those of a giant leaping through shallow water, a succession of enormous bursts."

The nearest to the *Firedrake*, said Divine, fell 30 yards away. But then there was the trawler. "The last but one hit a little trawler lying alongside the outer wall. They saw the splash of that explosion and the smoke that followed."

That, however, was the sum total of damage inflicted on the British by this attack. On the French side, casualties had been unexpectedly light. Further attacks were planned, but then were called off. The French Army squadrons were stood down from their full war alert on September 30. The Vichy Navy ended demonstrations also.

There remained only a curious postscript to the Vichy

Influential Luftwaffe *elements within the German high command wanted "Operation Felix"—Hitler's proposed plan for an assault on Gibraltar—to include a paratroop drop, similar to the one that took Crete in May 1941, and these tough troops would've been ferried into action by the Ju52 transport plane (seen here) used by the Germans throughout the war.*

air raids against Gibraltar. The most vicious comments afterwards were reserved not for the French by the British, or for the British by the French, but by the bitter men of the French Navy for their comrades-in-arms of the Army Air Force. Embittered as they were after their own terrible casualties at Mers-el-Kébir, they were enraged at what they saw as half-heartedness, perhaps cowardice or indifference, on the part of the Army aircrews in their effort to press home their attacks.

In a long and detailed naval anaylsis sent to the seething Darlan and others, such allegations were made in depth. Among the charges levelled at the Air Force by the Navy was the accusation that quite intentionally certain *Groupes* were *lache* (which can be translated as slovenly, lax, slack or even cowardly) and dropped their bombs outside the target area on purpose.

Even more specific was the later charge that the difference in the efficiency between the Army and Navy bombers was marked when comparisons were made. On the 24th, it seems, 65 Army bombers scored four direct hits on important targets, a success rate of only six percent, while 19 Navy bombers could claim 13 direct hits, or a 68-percent hit rate. Similar figures were shown for the 25th, the 63 Army planes scoring 12 reasonably accurate hits, or 19-percent success, while the 20 Navy planes hit their target 15 times, a 75-percent success rate. Though such figures were based on sketchy knowledge, their implication was obvious. The Navy had meant business; the Army clearly had not. The French Navy's figures are certainly born out by British analysis, which estimated that two-thirds of all bombs dropped fell into the sea: "Stick after stick fell off the end of Europa Point where it seemed as if they could have set their sights on no target at all, as if some of these pilots were unwilling in the last resort to drop the death that had been prepared for Germans upon their Allies."

The British claim of 12 French bombers destroyed was typical of the propaganda that also was seen in the Battle of Britain, but the reading of the true intentions of some of their former friends, was surely accurate—and to the credit of the French pilots themselves. □

Peter C. Smith writes from Britain as a writer specializing in World War II history. Related readings include Winston Churchill's six-volume The Second World War *and Brigadier Peter Young's* World War 1939-1945.

Mountain Breakthrough In Italy

To crack the Germans' formidable Gothic Line and spearhead the drive to the Po River, the Allies gambled on an untried American division made up of skiers and mountain climbers. Scaling the cliffside of Riva Ridge, they would find no easy path awaiting them.

By Flint Whitlock

A dense fog blanketed the valley, making the ice-covered cliff even more treacherous. Stiff, cold hands grasped frozen rock in the darkness of the Italian night, while feet felt blindly for footholds on the perpendicular rock face. Muffled hammers pounded pitons into cracks as ghostly figures in white parkas silently worked their way, like a relentless line of army ants, toward the top of the vertical cliff.

If a German sentry above had heard the noise of the hammers and had peered over the edge, the surprise raid would have been doomed. But no German looked over. No alarm was sounded. No shots rang out.

It was February 19, 1945. The soldiers moving up the cliff were 800 well-trained but untested members of the U.S. 10th Mountain Division. In Italy for less than a month, the 10th was facing its first major test—a night assault up the supposedly unclimbable face of Riva Ridge in Italy's Northern Apennine mountain range. The 10th Mountain Division was there as General Mark Clark's latest gamble in a difficult theater of war that had already seen too many gambles, blunders, failures or Pyrrhic victories over the enemy.

Certainly no other American division had taken to the field quite so well prepared for mountain warfare as the 10th Mountain Division. Called by some the most overtrained and under-utilized U.S. combat division of World War II, the 10th had been training for 23 months for just this opportunity. The men of Clark's Fifth Army who had been slogging and fighting their way up the Italian boot for months now had become mountain troops, too—but that's another story altogether.

At the start of the war, the Germans had 14 mountain divisions, while the U.S. had none. As Charles Minot ("Minnie") Dole, founder of the National Ski Patrol Sys-

Both the Axis and the Allies used ski and mountain troops throughout World War II, such as these members of a U.S. Army parachute infantry battalion on patrol in the French Alps on Dec. 20, 1944.

TOP: After landing on the Italian "boot" early in 1945, the tough 10th Mountain Division—with a host of top skiers within its ranks—slogged its way northward toward Bologna, Verona and the shores of Lake Garda against stiff German resistance. ABOVE: Alarmed at the successes of the crack German Alpenkorps *in Europe during 1940-41, the United States created its own elite alpine force, the famed 10th Mountain Division, seen here as its tank units open the spring, 1945, offensive to take Bologna.*

tem, scanned newspaper accounts of fighting in the mountainous regions of Europe, he realized that if America ever became involved in the conflict, the country would need troops specially trained in mountain warfare.

Repeated letters and visits to Washington to convince the War Department of the merits of training troops for mountain combat brought few results; some winter warfare maneuvers already had been conducted by elements of the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 41st, and 44th Divisions, but the U.S. Army brass was not much interested in specialized units. What they needed more urgently were more regular infantry divisions.

Despite repeated refusals, Dole persisted. At last, after reading a report of 10,000 Italian troops freezing to death in the mountains of Albania following a Greek counterattack, General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, authorized planning for the creation of three mountain divisions—the 10th, 12th and 14th (the latter two were never formed). On November 15, 1941, the first unit of what would later become the 10th Mountain Division—the 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment—was activated at Fort Lewis, Wash. America would find itself at war less than a month later.

At first, the 87th was an all-volunteer outfit. The National Ski Patrol, rather than the Army, was put in charge of recruiting outdoorsmen—skiers, mountain climbers, mule skinners, lumberjacks, cowboys, ranchers, forest rangers, and the like.

Out of 15,000 initial applicants, 8,000 were eventually accepted. The elite group included Walter Prager, the Dartmouth ski coach; Torger Tokle, a Norwegian and one of the world's best ski jumpers, and many skiers from Austria, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and American snowbelt colleges. The prospect of skiing for the Army drew scores of college-educated applicants, since skiing was primarily a sport for the well-schooled and well-heeled.

While the 87th trained at Fort Lewis, a new home for the unit was being constructed—at a cost of $28 million—in a mountain valley 100 miles west of Denver, Colo., and 9,000 feet above sea level. Built at a swampy whistle-stop called Pando, Camp Hale was a spectacular, if not altogether pleasant, place for an army camp. Surrounded by mountains and bisected by a cold stream known as the Eagle River, Camp Hale had a summer daytime temperature that rarely rose above 70 degrees, while in winter, waist-deep snows and temperatures that plunged to -30 degrees were not uncommon.

The 87th moved to its new quarters in December 1942, and a sister regiment, the 86th, was activated there the following spring, under the provisional command of the Mountain Training Center (later designated the Mountain Training Group and responsible for, among other things, the testing of skiing, mountain-climbing and cold-weather clothing and equipment). Then, in June of 1943, the 87th was sent to Fort Ord, Calif., for training in amphibious landings. No one could figure out why.

It all became clear six weeks later when the regiment was landed at Kiska in the Aleutian Islands to take on the last remnants of the Japanese force that had occupied the foggy, windswept islands a year earlier. But, after the bloody battle subduing their forces on the island of Attu, the Japanese had slipped away from nearby Kiska prior to its invasion August 15. Unfortunately, the 87th sustained 78 casualties (including 23 fatalities) in fire-fights with nervous, trigger-happy "friendly" units.

In February 1944, the 87th returned to Hale to find another regiment, the 85th, had been formed, and that all were now part of a new division—the 10th Light Division (Pack, Alpine).

Training now began in earnest—climbing mountains, rappeling down sheer cliffs, hiking uphill laden with 60-pound rucksacks, skiing through deep powder, testing experimental equipment for the Mountain Training Group, and digging foxholes in rocky ground toughened the men. The 10th was now sharply honed and ready for war. But the war was not ready for the 10th.

Each day brought fresh news of the fighting in Europe. The Russians were pushing the Germans back along the Eastern Front and the Allied invasion of France was imminent. Yet, it seemed to the proud men of the 10th that they had been forgotten by the Army and were condemned to spend the duration freezing in a remote, rear-echelon Colorado valley.

In June of 1944, with the invasion of Europe on, orders came down: troop movement! But hopes of joining the action overseas were dashed when the orders turned out to be for Camp Swift, Texas—hot, dusty, and without a mountain in sight. Morale began to sink. Some of the men went AWOL.

The broiling Texas heat and flatland training convinced the men that the 10th was being turned into just another infantry division. After Thanksgiving 1944, however, the division's fortunes suddenly took a turn for the better—it had been assigned a genuine war hero as its new commander. Brigadier General George P. Hays had earned the Congressional Medal of Honor in World War I, and had recently returned from the fighting at Monte Cassino, Italy. He had also previously commanded the 2nd Infantry Division artillery on Omaha Beach and had spent 170 days fighting on French soil.

The new CO wasn't the only good news; on 7 November, the division changed its name from the 10th Light Division to the 10th Mountain Division, and the men were issued small "MOUNTAIN" tabs to sew above their crossed-bayonet shoulder patches. Then came the orders for which they had waited so long—overseas movement, destination secret! It wasn't until the troopships were halfway across the Atlantic that the curtain of secrecy was finally lifted—the 10th was going to Italy.

The battle for the Italian peninsula had been grinding on since Operation AVALANCHE landed Allied troops at Salerno on September 9, 1943, following smaller landings earlier. Inching their way up "the boot," the Allies found one assault after another blunted by tenacious German resistance—and by the indomitable mountains that ran down the center of the country and turned every German position into a fortress.

Since Salerno, the Allied advance in Italy had become a series of costly, controversial victories—the breakout from the beachhead, the drive to capture Naples, the Volturno River crossing, the Liri Valley, San Pietro, the Rapido River, the Anzio landings, Monte Cassino, and countless others. Italy was no soft underbelly of Europe.

As the Allies pushed the Germans from one stronghold, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, the *Luftwaffe* officer in charge of Army Group C, would set up another line of defense—the Bernhard Line, the Barbara Line, the Gustav Line, the Hitler Line, the Frieda Line, the Gothic Line.

Adding to the Allies' problems in late spring of 1944 was the fact that more and more units were being transferred from the Italian campaign and sent to England in preparation for Operation OVERLORD—the soon-to-come Normandy invasion.

After that historic assault on June 6, 1944, Italy became the forgotten front. Coming two days after the Allies captured Rome, the Normandy invasion became the most important war story. The fighting in Italy ceased being news. After all, with the overthrow of Mussolini, the capitulation of Italy, and the capture of Rome, the general public assumed, the war in Italy must be *finito*.

Sherman medium tanks of the 751st Tank Battalion on the crest of captured Mount Belvedere in Italy, taken by troops of the 10th after three days of heavy fighting against the entrenched German foe. In the background is Bano Valley and Route 64, which leads toward sought-after Bologna.

To the forgotten Allied soldier, especially the American Fifth Army, slogging through knee-deep mud, being sniped at or shelled, or trying to scale impossible heights to root out a determined enemy day after day, this rosy picture of peace in Italy simply was not true.

The official strategy for Italy was to have the Allies bottle up as many German divisions as possible to keep them from being shifted to other, more important fronts. But General Mark Clark, now commander of 15th Army Group, did not believe his men should simply dig in and lob shells at the Germans. He wanted the troops under his command to continue the offensive, with the city of Bologna and the industrially important Po River Valley the main objective.

Clark felt that breaking through the Gothic Line in the last great range of mountains before the Po Valley was imperative. But the Germans were well fortified, and neither the U.S. Fifth Army under Lucien Truscott, nor the British Eighth Army under R.L. McCreery had been able to dislodge them.

As autumn of 1944 wore on, the Allied armies, temptingly close to the Po Valley, had to content themselves with limited advances along a front that stretched from Leghorn on the Ligurian Sea to Pimini on the Adriatic. In the war of attrition, the Germans had suffered tremendous losses, but the Allies, too, had been badly mauled. The U.S. II Corps lost 2,491 men in a six-day period (10-15 October), while the Eighth Army had suffered 14,000 casualties of all kinds since the Gothic Line offensive

began in late August. Requests for replacements were denied—the Allied priority continued to be focused upon northwestern Europe.

Meanwhile, Kesselring took advantage of the diminishing Allied attacks to reinforce his lines in front of Bologna. The Allies suddenly had to contend with strong German counterattacks—it appeared the Germans might even go onto the offensive.

Bad weather now struck in earnest, destroying most of the few remaining bridges and wiping out Allied supply routes and lines of communication. The flood waters also hampered German efforts to improve defensive positions. Like two utterly exhausted prizefighters, neither side was capable of delivering a knock-out blow. The prize—the Po Valley—lay within sight, but the Allies no longer had the strength needed to punch through the last line of German resistance before their goal.

Although the Allies continued to plan for future operations and did engage in sporadic skirmishing, most of December and the first part of January 1945 was a stalemate—except for a brief-but-fierce attempt on December 26 by the Germans to strike against the all-black 92nd Division on IV Corps' left flank. The Germans managed some successes, only to be repulsed by air power and the 8th Indian Division. For the Germans, however, the limited results lifted morale and gave some newly arrived green troops needed combat experience. Still, as the cold and wet winter continued, troops on both sides of the Gothic Line settled in, expecting no major action before spring.

By the end of January, meanwhile, the 10th Mountain Division had completed its overseas deployment and had taken up positions in the hills north of Florence. Except for patrolling and trading artillery fire with the Germans, the 10th saw little real action in its first few weeks in Italy.

Behind the scenes, however, plans were being made that would end all that. A new Allied offensive, code-named Operation ENCORE, was being drawn up. The objective would be the high ground that dominated a ten-mile section of Highway 64, a vital north-south roadway connecting Pistoia and Bologna.

Several mountain peaks in this section, including Monte Gorgolesco, the Valpiana Ridge, Monte Castello, Monte della Torracia, and the key mountain, the 3,800-foot Monte Belvedere, were held by the 51st German Mountain Corps. From their high ground, the Germans could spot any Allied movement toward their positions and send artillery fire down upon it.

Calling General Hays to his headquarters, General Truscott informed him that the 10th would spearhead the Allied assault being planned. The 10th would be supported on the left flank by the 92nd Division and by the Brazilian Expeditionary Force on its right.

Studying the topographic map, Truscott favored an assault against Monte Belvedere, the southernmost peak. Four previous Allied attacks against it had failed, and Hays could see why—the approaches to Belvedere were exposed to direct artillery fire from Riva Ridge, some five miles to the west, or on the 10th's left flank. Riva Ridge, Hays then argued, was the key to Belvedere. He won the argument.

Returing to his division, Hays informed the 86th Regiment's commander, Lt. Col. Clarence Tomlinson, that he wanted the 86th to climb, attack, and hold Riva Ridge. He then informed the other regimental commanders that they would attack Belvedere immediately thereafter. Artillery and air support would not be used to soften up German positions on Riva, since a preliminary bombardment too obviously would signal the coming attack.

Riva Ridge is actually a connected series of peaks known as Monte Mancinello, Cappel Buso, Chingio del Bure, Monte Serrasiccia and Pizzo del Campiano. On its south side, the side facing the Allies, Riva is a 1,500-foot cliff, while its north side slopes gently toward the Po Valley. Dug in on its top were the 4th (*Edelweiss*) Mountain Battalion and a battalion from the 1044th Regiment of the German 232nd Infantry Division.

Riva Ridge is not uniformly steep—there are places that any hiker can negotiate with ease. But there are also deep rifts and eroded gullies, places where the rock is brittle and easily shattered, places hidden from the sun where snow and ice collect, places where the track becomes obscure and disappears altogether. It is not the kind of place anyone would want to climb at night, especially when weighted down with heavy equipage.

For the next two weeks, the mountain troopers practiced their rock-climbing and rappeling techniques in a marble quarry at Lucca and honed their marksmanship

TALE OF TWO MOUNTAIN SOLDIERS

A U.S. Army combat patrol blasts the Germans with a bazooka in Italy.

It was on the combined British and American drive in mid-April, code-named CRAFTMAN, that a 10th-Division member earned the unit's only Congressional Medal of Honor of World War II.

Assaulting a featureless hill that had only a number (Hill 909) for a name, Pfc. John Magrath, 19, of George Company, 85th Regiment, charged through withering fire to capture a German machine gun, kill two of the enemy and capture three.

With the machine gun, Magrath then wiped out two more machine-gun nests. He next circled behind a fourth German position, to kill two and wound three of the enemy as they were firing on his own troops.

However, later in the day (April 14), while checking on casualties, Magrath was mortally wounded by mortar fire.

Earlier, during the division's assault upon the Belvedere mountain mass in February, another American mountaineer had appeared lost to his own side's fire. Taken prisoner by the Germans defending the peaks adjoining Riva Ridge, Pfc. Malmford Heimer was hustled into a house in a nearby village. Minutes later, the house came under a barrage of American fire from rifles, mortars, machine guns and howitzers.

"I thought we had seen the last of Heimer," confessed the young private's squadleader later.

In the firefight that ensued, the house was demolished. Eventually, with seven of their own men killed, 19 well-armed Germans emerged to surrender to Heimer's squad. When his fellow GIs searched through the rubble, amazingly, they found their buddy still alive and not even hurt.

The men of the 10th Mountain received valuable military assistance from roving bands of Italian partisans, such as these men briefed near Vidiciatico by their commander, Gen. Ricco Mario Armando, on April 13, 1945. The partisans ranged in age from 15 to 70, and one of their members executed Italian dictator Benito Mussolini two weeks later.

skills on an improvised rifle range. Climbing-team leaders studied the stony face of Riva with binoculars and pored over aerial reconnaissance photos to map their routes to the top.

Not all of the study took place from a distance. Frequent night patrols probed the cliff's defenses. One night, shortly before the planned raid, a four-man patrol climbed Riva's southern flanks, only to be confronted by a barking sentry dog at the top. Three German sentries who came to investigate the dog's barking were killed.

Four routes up Riva's deeply furrowed face had been found—the patrols had secured climbing ropes to the rock as handholds for the assault teams that would soon follow.

The 1st Battalion of the 86th Regiment was given the responsibility of taking the height. Captain Bill Neidner's Able Company, minus a platoon, was assigned to Mancinello. Captain Ken Seigman's Baker Company was to take Cappel Buso, while Captain Worth McClure's Charlie Company had Serrasiccia. Captain Percy Rideout, CO of the 2nd Battalion's Fox Company, was assigned to capture Chingio del Bure. Lieutenant James Loose, leader of the detached platoon from Able Company, was assigned to take the highest point on Riva Ridge, a rocky knob called Pizzo del Campiano.

The 1st Battalion moved out from its rear-area encampment and holed up for a day in the little villages that dotted the valley floor at the base of Riva Ridge.

Some of the men dozed and rested for the coming night's ordeal. Others wrote letters home. Still others carefully checked their climbing ropes, snap links and pitons, discarding any that showed the slightest flaw. Pathfinders wrapped the heads of their small hammers with cloth to muffle the noise of pitons being driven into rock.

When night fell on Sunday, February 18, the white-clad mountain troopers moved from their hiding places, crossed a small, icy river and headed toward Riva. A thick fog hid their movement from the Germans above.

Up the lower slopes went the lead elements, working with practiced, methodical precision. Where earlier patrols had left no climbing ropes, the pathfinders hammered pitons into crevices and strung ropes through the snap links. As the hammers clicked dully in the crisp, night air, the climbers expected that, at any moment, the Germans would discover them and blast them off the wall. But nothing happened—for the moment, it all seemed too easy, like another training exercise in the Rockies.

Seigman's Bravo Company, the first to reach its objective, was also the first to run into the surprised enemy. Shortly after 1:00 a.m., and 400 yards from its objective on Cappel Buso, the company came under fire from German mortars, machine guns and small arms. After a brief fire fight, Bravo was on Cappel Buso's summit and consolidating its position.

By 0300 hours, Able Company had taken the top of Mancinello, and, 55 minutes later, Fox Company had secured Chingio del Bure. Charlie Company captured Serrasiccia at 5:08. American casualties on each peak were light. All that was left for a clean sweep was the high point, Pizzo del Campiano.

But Lieutenant Loose's platoon had run into trouble. Two squads had become lost in the fog on the way up, and the rest of the men—ten of them—were able to reach the

top only by crawling on hands and knees. At 5:44, Loose's depleted force went over the top, tossing hand grenades into the German bunkers and firing at any Germans who showed themselves.

The Germans quickly regrouped and began counterattacking Loose's platoon. By now, most of Loose's missing men had rejoined the unit, but the Germans had them surrounded and were closing in. A heavy German mortar and artillery barrage began at 10 a.m., and at times the fighting on Pizzo del Campiano was hand-to-hand. One 10th Mountain trooper threw back two potato-masher grenades—one of which had landed in his lap.

The beleaguered lieutenant radioed his division artillery for fire on his position. "We can't fire there," came the reply. "Those are friendly troops there."

Loose radioed back: "If we don't get supporting fire soon, you'll have nothing to support."

"On the way, wait, " said the artillery officer as, in seconds, howitzers barked from the valley below.

With the platoon hugging the hill, American shells crashed onto Pizzo del Campiano with such precision that the Germans were stopped cold and the mountain troopers came through unscathed.

For a day and a half, Loose's meager force held the summit without food, water, ammunition, supplies or reinforcements being able to reach them. Four different relief attempts were mounted, but the Germans remaining on Riva Ridge kept them away.

On the 21st, a relief column led by 1st Battalion commander Lt. Col. Henry Hampton finally managed to reach them, and the final peak on Riva was, if not completely safe from harassing fire, at least secure.

While the battle for Pizzo del Campiano was still raging, a company of mountain engineers had scaled the cliff and installed an 1,800-foot steel cable as an aerial tramway that hauled supplies up from the valley and transported the wounded from the top to the aid stations below. This reduced evacuation time from three hours to just five minutes and undoubtedly saved many lives.

American casualties were light—only one officer and six enlisted men had died, while the ridge was littered with German bodies. Hundreds of others had been wounded or taken prisoner by the mountain troopers.

Late on February 19, with everything on Riva except Pizzo del Campiano secured, the 85th and 87th Regiments had begun their assault against the real target, the neighboring Belvedere-Gorgolesco-della Torracia hill mass. And, as the 86th had done, the men of 85th and 87th Regiments first hid from enemy eyes by holing up in every house, barn, and building in every nearby village.

In the hamlet of Vidiciatico, the Italian civilians had fervently welcomed the GIs as liberators. The previous September, after an Italian partisan had fired on a group of *Wehrmacht* troops, the Germans had rounded up a number of innocent villagers and executed them in reprisal.

At 11 p.m. on the 19th, the mountain troopers, many of them laden with gifts of wine and food from their grateful hosts, moved out and began their long upward climb.

Division artillery had opened up at 9:30, and the 2nd Battalion of the German 1044th Regiment on Belvedere knew a new Allied offensive had begun. As the mountain troopers came into view, the Germans began hammering the advancing Americans with everything they had.

Fighting their way through barbed wire, minefields, mortars, artillery and small-arms fire, the men of the 87th reached their objective, the Valpiana Ridge, the northwestern spur of Belvedere, within a few hours, while the 3rd Battalion of the 85th Regiment began a direct assault against Belvedere's southern flank. The 1st Battalion of the 85th attacked Monte Gorgolesco, located just northeast of Belvedere.

German machine guns raked the slopes, cutting down many Mountaineers, but still the 10th came on. American artillery blasted German positions and, as dawn broke, American and British fighter bombers roared in to support the attack.

Despite the bombardment, the Germans' 714th *Jäger* Division, reinforced by elements of the 1043rd Infantry Regiment of the 232nd Division, struck back at the 3rd Battalion of the 85th on Belvedere. Although the Germans failed to completely halt the advance, they slowed the 10th's drive toward the northeast.

On the afternoon of the 21st, the 2nd Battalion of the 85th attacked Monte della Torraccia, but it soon became clear that the Germans were going to stand and fight. During the next 24 hours, more than 1,000 rounds of German artillery crashed down on the 85th. The battalion commander was wounded, as were scores of his men, and the battalion was pinned down just a few hundred yards from its objective. Late on the 22nd, the battalion had only 400 men still capable of fighting and was low on ammunition, food and water.

General Hays decided to relieve the battered 85th with the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 86th. On the afternoon of the 23rd, the 3rd Battalion of the 86th began its assault against the crest of Torraccia, but again heavy resistance stopped the Americans.

The battle for Torraccia raged throughout the night as both sides struggled for control of the hill.

With dawn on the 24th, tactical aircraft strafed German positions and the last of the defenders on Torraccia surrendered. By nightfall, several counterattacks had been beaten back, and the entire group of peaks from Riva Ridge to Monte Castello (that latter captured by the Brazilian Expeditionary Force) was in Allied hands.

Near the village of Iola, however, T/Sgt. Torger Tokle, the international ski-jumping champion, had been killed while trying to flush out an enemy machine-gun nest that had his men pinned down.

In just six days, the 10th had captured nearly 400 Germans, inflicted heavy losses on some of Kesselring's toughest mountain fighters and virtually dismantled a key portion of the Gothic Line. Now, it appeared, the men could relax, reflect on their accomplishments, remember their fallen comrades, even crack a few jokes.

But not so. The 10th's respite was short-lived. Within a week the mountain troops were again called upon to thrust through enemy lines, this time toward Vergato, a sizeable town along Highway 64, 12 miles northeast of Monte Belvedere. The objective was another line of peaks—Monte Grande d'Aiano, Monte della Spe, Monte della Castellana and Monte Valbura—peaks that comprised a new defensive line: The Genghis Khan Line.

With the Brazilians again on its right flank, the 10th jumped off on March 3 and, by the next day, had captured all four mountains. Late on the night of the 5th, though, the Germans recovered and launched the first of four counterattacks against the 1st Battalion of the 87th Regiment on Monte della Spe. Here, Kesselring committed his major reserve, the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division, but after fierce hand-to-hand combat, the 10th held fast. By March 8, the 10th's objectives were secured and an additional 1,000 German prisoners were marched to the rear.

With the Allies now in control of a broad front, the breakthrough into the Po Valley finally was at hand. The 10th held a six-mile front that stretched from Monte Grande d'Aiano to Highway 64 and was poised for the thrust toward Bologna.

Battery A of the 1125th Field Artillery Battalion of the 10th fires its 105mm howitzer—mounted on a full-tracked gun carriage—at a German convoy on the far side of Italian Lake Garda near Gargnano on April 29, 1945.

The massive spring offensive soon underway called for a coordinated pincer movement, with the Fifth Army swinging to the west of Bologna and the British Eighth pushing to the east of the city in an attempt to bag as many Germans as possible fleeing northward for the Brenner Pass. This complicated plan, code-named Operation CRAFTSMAN, would require the involvement of nearly every Allied unit in Northern Italy as well as all tactical aircraft. In addition, the Allies were counting on some 50,000 partisans to wage guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines. D-Day was scheduled for early April, with the Eighth Army leading the way in the East.

The main British attack began on April 9 and, after heavy fighting, succeeded in breaking through the Argenta Gap toward Ferrara. The Fifth Army's drive was delayed two days by fog which prevented effective air cover but managed to kick off on April 14. For its part, after a heavy barrage and aerial bombardment, the 10th Mountain Division quickly overran its assigned well-constructed but under-manned German defenses.

As the 10th advanced, it drove a wedge between the German 94th and 334th Divisions and took a number of key positions, including Rocca Roffeno and the village of Torre Iussi. The 10th's casualties for the first day had been heavier than expected: 553 mountain infantrymen killed, wounded or missing.

On April 15, the 10th resumed its drive northward. Mountain after mountain, hill after hill, village after village fell to the 10th, its youthful exuberance long gone and replaced by the bone-weariness common to all veteran foot soldiers.

At last, on 20 April, Hitler's 56th birthday, the men of the 86th Regiment broke out of the Northern Appenines into the broad Lombardy plain near Ponte Samoggia, ten miles northwest of Bologna, spearheading forward of the U.S. 34th, 85th and 88th Divisions. The next day, the 34th captured Bologna.

With the German 14th Army in complete retreat, the Allies pressed northward. To maximize the pursuit, Hays organized a combined infantry-armor task force, led by the assistant division commander, Brig. Gen. Robinson Duff, to speed toward the Po. On 21 April, Task Force Duff reached the Panaro River and captured the Bomporto Bridge intact. The next day, however, a mine exploded near Duff's jeep, critically wounding him, and Hays took personal command of the task force.

On 23 April, the 87th Regiment, in an echo of its previous amphibious experience in the Aleutians, became the first American unit to cross the Po, using assault boats provided by IV Corps Engineers.

The Fifth Army's objective, now that the Po had been breached, was the city of Verona, 27 miles away on the Adige River. The 10th's mission was to bypass Mantua and cut the highway linking Verona with Lake Garda in hopes of capturing German troops fleeing for the Alps.

Again, Hays formed a mobile task force to spearhead the advance. This time, he selected Colonel William Darby, former commander of Darby's Rangers and the

TOP: Private Hubert Campbell of Eugene, Ore., a 10th Division Military Policeman, points his M3 machine pistol at Italian and German prisoners brought in by American ski troops of the U.S. Fifth Army in 1945. MIDDLE: Attack! Troops of Company F of the 86th Mountain Regiment of the 10th Mountain Division advance uphill under friendly air and artillery in the big push on Bologna, Italy, beginning on April 14, 1945. ABOVE: Mountain transport is provided by this sturdy mule of the 1st Battalion, 86th Infantry Regiment of the 10th at Roffeno, Italy, on April 16, 1945. Lashing the special 37mm gun securely is Kenneth Hill of Kingsburg, Calif.

new assistant division commander in place of the wounded Robinson Duff, to take charge of the task force.

By this time, the Germans were surrendering in droves. For ten days, there had been little resistance, and the Allied units often found Italian partisans in control of the towns they had come to liberate. Clearly, the end was now in sight.

However, the mountainous area east of Lake Garda, Task Force Darby's objective, was still in the hands of the XIV Panzer Corps, and its personnel were determined to make a final stand.

On April 28, as the mountain troops and their armored transport approached a series of highway tunnels flanking the eastern side of the lake, the concealed Germans opened up with automatic weapons, then sappers blew up the tunnel entrances, blocking the road. Hays had anticipated just such a situation and had several companies of amphibious DUKWs accompanying his men. When it became obvious that the demolished tunnels could not be quickly cleared, the men of the 86th Regiment climbed in the DUKWs and outflanked the tunnels, going ashore several miles to the north.

On the 29th, as Task Force Darby closed in on the towns of Riva, Torbole and Nago at the northern end of the lake, German resistance stiffened. With their backs to the wall, the Germans launched a violent counterattack against the 10th, employing tanks and self-propelled artillery. Shortly before midnight, the 3rd Battalion of the 86th fought its way into Torbole, but, not wanting to risk any more lives in the final days of the war, Hays pulled his men back to safe positions. The Germans, too, withdrew, leaving the three towns to the Americans. The last battle for Italy had ended.

There was still time for one final tragedy, however. The next day, April 30, Darby and other staff officers were standing outside a hotel in Torbole that served as the 86th Regiment's command post. Without warning, a single, random round from a German 88mm gun exploded yards from the unsuspecting group. Two officers were wounded, the regimental sergeant major was killed, and the 34-year-old Darby died within minutes, a piece of shrapnel lodged in his heart.

Two days later, on Wednesday, May 2, 1945, the Germans in Italy surrendered. Throughout the country, church bells rang, people wept with joy, and weary soldiers got drunk.

In only 114 days of combat, the 10th Mountain Division had carved its legend into the mountains and plains of Italy, taking every objective to which it had been assigned. Yet, the victory was not without its price—992 men of the 10th had given their lives (including the 23 killed on Kiska in the Aleutians), and 4,154 had been wounded.

In spite of the heavy losses, the men of the 10th could still celebrate the end of the war in the one way that seemed uniquely appropriate for them—they organized a ski race.

On June 3, on the steep slopes of 8,927-foot Mt. Mangart, the 10th's best skiers challenged each other.

First Sergeant Walter Prager, the former Dartmouth College ski coach, won.

It seemed a fitting way, not merely to end a war, but to begin a new world. □

Flint Whitlock hails from the ski country of Colorado, where he is creative director for an advertising agency after teaching journalism at the University of Colorado. Further readings: Cassino to the Alps *by Ernest F. Fisher, Jr. (U.S. Army in WWII series, Center of Military History, U.S. Army), and* Mark Clark *by Martin Blumenson.*

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The secret growth of the Luftwaffe *was soon followed by modern additions for the Royal Air Force.*

By Blaine Taylor

As the year 1936 drew to a close, German Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler was sending a new German Ambassador to the Court of St. James in London. And as Joachim von Ribbentrop, a wealthy champagne salesman, took his leave, he received his final instructions: "Bring me the British alliance!"

When he'd written *Mein Kampf* (My Battle) in prison 13 years earlier, Hitler revealed the two countries in Europe with which he desired military alliances: Fascist Italy and Great Britain. By 1936, he was still planning his eventual Axis Pact with Italy's Benito Mussolini, but any alliance with Britain was only a chimera at best.

Even by this early date, Hitler realized that the British Royal Air Force would one day possibly be a match for the mighty German *Luftwaffe* (air weapon) that he and his portly air force chief and former World War I fighter ace Hermann Göring had unveiled the year before with pomp and ceremony—and in flagrant violation of the Allied-promulgated Versailles Peace Treaty that humiliated Imperial Germany in 1918. Hitler would see his fears realized in the Battle of Britain four years later, following the fall of France in the summer of 1940.

Von Ribbentrop was the wrong man to send to the British Isles (upon being presented to King George V, for instance, he committed what was considered an unpardonable diplomatic gaffe by shouting out "Heil Hitler!" and giving the startled English monarch the Nazi salute), but it's doubtful a British-German rapprochement was ever possible anyway.

More to the point, however, Hitler in the 1930s impressed the British much as Kaiser Wilhelm II had done in the years preceding the First World War, when he built the great German High Seas Fleet as challenge to the island empire's domination over the world's seas.

From left to right, German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, Luftwaffe Reich Marshal Hermann Göring, Field Marshal Erhard Milch (back to camera) and General Karl Bodenschatz gather at a field headquarters.

Indeed, one of the chapters of Winston Churchill's post-Second World War memoirs is entitled "Parity Lost," and it recalls the development of what soon would be the world's strongest and most modern combat air force. From that point on, noted Churchill, war with Nazi Germany was inevitable. From that point on, too, he became Hitler's most implacable foe.

All of this is ably recounted in the latest study on the *Luftwaffe*, *Victory Denied: The Rise of Air Power and the Defeat of Germany, 1920-45* (Franklin Watts, publishers, $18.95) by Dudley Saward. The author's previous books include *The Bomber's Eye*, *Bernard Lovell: A Biography* and the best-selling *Bomber Harris: The Authorized Biography*. Based on the writer's own experiences as an RAF officer on the Northwest Frontier before the war and throughout all of World War II in Europe, the book also reflects intensive research into both German and British files, as well as interviews with such active participants as Harris and Nazi Armaments Minister Albert Speer.

The result is a study of two air forces in tandem, both the *Luftwaffe* and the RAF. Nor is it limited to the preparation for and waging of the Second World War, since both forces actually were born during the First World War, as the author notes. As with the Navy, it was under Kaiser Wilhelm that the first German air force appeared. Its initial, front-rank stars—Manfred von Richthofen, Oswald Bolcke, Max Immelmann and many others—were killed, but their proteges survived to create the second force, just as their offspring did in the 1950s to forge the West German *Luftwaffe* of today.

The second-tier leadership cadre included such aces as Ernst Udet, Bruno Loerzer, Wolfram von Richthofen (a cousin of the famed "Red Baron" who became a Field Marshal in the 1939-45 war) and the last commander of the Richthofen "Flying Circus" in 1918—the portly Hermann Wilhelm Göring.

It was the latter, as a famous holder of the *Pour le Merite* (Order of Merit, or "Blue Max" as it is popularly known), who became really the first well-known public figure to join Adolf Hitler's struggling, rowdy and largely-unknown political party after the first war. He brought not only his star quality and organizational abilities to the Nazis, but also his social entrees to such former Imperial luminaries as the ex-Crown Prince, Wilhelm (called "Little Willy" by his detractors), the wealthy Ruhr industrialists and the Berlin bankers who later helped finance Hitler's rise to power.

As Saward reveals, even during the

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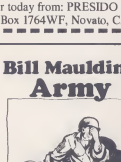

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period in which he was the *Führer*'s "bagman" (and selling cars for BMW), Göring was planning the eventual reconstruction of the *Luftwaffe*, banned from existence in 1919 by the victorious Allies. How he did this, as detailed in *Victory Denied*, is one of the great undercover stories of modern times, one obscured by the latter decline of the Reich Marshal personally and the destruction of his *Luftwaffe* in wartime.

As his General of the Fighter Pilots, Adolf Galland, states, the build-up was done at the same time that the Army was being reconstituted and the Navy being re-created. To do it, Göring brought in German civilian airline executive Erhard Milch and professional Army men such as Albert Kesselring, both of whom Hitler made *Luftwaffe* Field Marshals.

But the Nazis alone were not totally responsible for the air force's rejuvenation, Saward asserts—the embryo was kept alive during the 1920s on German bases hidden away in the Soviet Union, a stratagem employed under the Republic of President Paul von Hindenburg, the ex-Kaiser's most renowned Field Marshal.

The rest of the book details how and where the twin air forces fought it out in the skies over Europe once the war began—but not before the fledgling *Luftwaffe*'s "Kondor Legion" got its baptism of fire in the Spanish Civil War under the leadership of Von Richthofen, Galland and another future Field Marshal, Hugo Sperrle.

The book reveals that, after the Allied debacle at Dunkirk, Milch pressed for an immediate air invasion of Britain. On June 18, 1940, he went to see Göring and urged the dispatch of all available paratroops and airborne forces to capture key fighter air bases in Britain, such as Manston, Tangmere, Westhampnett, Gravesend or Hawkinge. The airborne attacks were to receive "artillery" support from Stuka dive-bomber formations, which in turn were to have aerial cover from Me 109 fighter squadrons. "As soon as the airfields had been taken over, they were to be reinforced by ordinary ground troops lifted in by Ju 52 transports in second and third waves; these aircraft would also maintain supplies of ammunition whilst further troops and supplies were ferried across the channel in sea-going transports. The air support was to be provided by Air Fleet 2 under Kesselring and by Air Fleet 3 under Sperrle. It was a bold plan which might well have succeeded."

Operation SEA LION, however, was predicated on Göring's pilots

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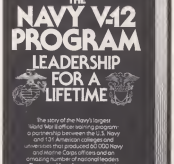
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obtaining a mastery over the English in the air that clearly Grand Admiral Erich Raeder's navy could never gain at sea, particularly not in the English Channel. The *Luftwaffe*, as detailed here, was able neither to destroy the RAF nor to erode English morale by bombing cities.

Almost from the start, too, despite Göring's famed boastfulness that not an enemy bomb would ever hit the Reich from the air, German cities were subjected to bombing, first from the British, later from the Americans. Soon, it became a question of how fast could "Bomber" Harris' formations of Halifax, Stirling and Lancaster aircraft destroy German industry, as opposed to how ingenious Speer was in rebuilding or even hiding German assembly plants.

The bombing of Hamburg showed clearly what the Third Reich was in for. The Nazi Propaganda Minister, Josef Goebbels, noted in his diary: "A first report spoke of a catastrophe the extent of which simply staggers the imagination." And Speer told author Saward after the war, "Hamburg put the fear of God in me!"

Speer said also that Harris was right in 1943 when he claimed no invasion of Western Europe was even necessary in 1944 because the German war potential could've been entirely destroyed from the air—a view shared by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel as well.

During the post-war Nuremberg Trials, Sperrle would say "Allied bombing was the dominant factor in the success of the Normandy invasion," to which Göring added, "The air forces prepared the invasion; they made it possible; they carried it through."

It remained for Albert Kesselring, though, to sum it all up in a single sentence: "Allied air power was the single greatest reason for the German defeat," and in this stunning study, Dudley Saward shows us where, why, when and how.

Flying MacArthur To Victory, *by Weldon E. (Dusty) Rhoades, Texas A&M University Press, 1987, $19.95.*

A book by someone who drove, flew or laid out the pajamas and toothbrush of a Well-Known Person, inevitably raises the question, "Yes, but what was he *really* like?" Apart from one or two anecdotes, this book based on the diary of Colonel Dusty Rhoades, who was General Douglas MacArthur's personal pilot during World War II, does little to reveal more of the personality of the enigmatic Pacific Commander-in-Chief, except to show that he was a demand-

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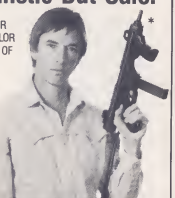

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The author—Colonel Rhoades (left) gets last-minute instructions from General MacArthur (center) at Manila just prior to their historic takeoff to begin the occupation of Japan in 1945. At right is General Robert Eichelberger.

ing workaholic who had the utmost confidence in his own abilities.

But we knew that anyway. After all, people who command armies are not usually wallflowers.

The real value of this book, however, is that it shows the amount of work, dissension and sheer grinding doggedness that goes into winning a war. It also offers some interesting asides on how the conflict, particularly in the Pacific, was conducted. Rhoades became chief pilot of MacArthur's personal B-17, BATAAN, in 1944 after earlier war service as a civilian instructor. Often flying up to 25 hours at a stretch, he criss-crossed the world, not only ferrying MacArthur and staff, but personally delivering documents marked, "For MacArthur's Eyes Only."

MacArthur, as always, remains a cryptic and unusual individual—always aloof and never quite in focus. Rhoades writes that he saw MacArthur blow up one minute over relatively minor details and in the next remain icily calm over major calamities. Unfortunately, never does he tell us what details or what calamities.

But some anecdotes do give us a glimpse of the real MacArthur. We read, for example, how he instructed Rhoades on the proper way to enter an automobile with a senior officer. And there is a scene where MacArthur vomits in the captain's cabin on board the battleship *Missouri* before going up on deck and accepting the surrender of the Japanese Empire.

Rhoades seemed to have his most personal interaction, however, with Lt. Gen. Richard Sutherland, MacArthur's Chief of Staff, and in some ways, Sutherland is the dominant figure in this book. As the war progressed, a deep rift developed between Sutherland and his commander, and he ended the war a bitter man.

The problem seems to have been twofold. First, Sutherland had a serious affair with an Australian woman, and he obtained a captain's commission for her in the American WACs "in some irregular way." Secondly, Sutherland favored striking directly at the Japanese homeland, while MacArthur was adamant all through the war on liberating the Philippines, "to aid our friends." Sutherland dated his troubles, according to Rhoades, from when he made a strategic decision on bypassing Mindanao because MacArthur could not be reached.

Flying MacArthur To Victory may also clear up some other minor controversies. We learn for a fact, for example, that MacArthur was seriously contemplating running for president against Roosevelt in 1944 but decided against it after "considering who the next Pacific commander might be." And finally, according to Rhoades, who was in it, the real picture of MacArthur wading ashore in the Philippines was the one published in *Life* magazine on November 13, 1944. Two other pictures of a simulated landing were taken later by photographer Carl Mydans. All three have been captioned at various times and places as the original picture.

As footnote to America's biggest war, this is an interesting book, but its diary format does not make for easy reading, and one can only wish the publisher had done some serious rewriting and at least eliminated the number of times we find ourselves reading that Rhoades took the afternoon off to go swimming.

Barry Taylor

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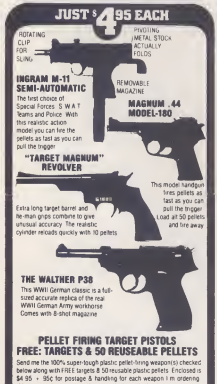
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Armament

Continued from page 8

iary weapon that could be launched from surface ships for use in fleet actions. The first two midgets built did not have conning towers, and reached submerged speeds of 25 knots. Two more prototypes constructed at Kure in 1936 had rudimentary small conning towers. They were successfully tested by the seaplane tender *Chitose*. Considerable effort was made to keep these experiments secret, even to the point of listing their converted mother ships as seaplane tenders. Parts for the midgets were manufactured by private yards; the craft were assembled on an island near Kure Harbor, in complete secrecy.

During the design stage, and the early construction period, the midgets were known as *A-Kanemono*—"Metal Fittings, Type A." When they reached the fleet, numerous names were used in an attempt to maintain their secret classification. They were known as "A-Target," "H Metal Fittings," "M Metal Fittings," "Model T.B.," "Model B," "Antisubmarine Bombing Target," "Koryu," and "Special Underwater Attack Craft." In their planning for "Hawaii Operation," the name for the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese referred to the midgets as "Target A."

Four seaplane tenders, *Chiyoda*, *Nisshin*, *Mizuho* and *Chitose* and at least one LST (Fast Transport T.5) were converted to carry midgets, although none was ever known to have launched a midget in combat. The seaplane tenders, particularly the *Chiyoda*, were used extensively in training "pilots" for the submarines. This work was carried out off Ourazaki Island, 12 miles southeast of Kure, in an area called "Base P."

After Pearl Harbor, the next time midget submarines were used was in an attack made in the harbor at Sydney, Australia, on May 31, 1942. The attack was carried out by a small force of three submarines and one aircraft-carrying submarine, under the command of Captain Hanku Sasaki. The conventional subs were I.22, I.27, I.24, each carrying a midget, and I.21, carrying an aircraft.

The aircraft launched by I.21 scouted Sydney on May 29 and reported three large combatant ships and numerous smaller warships in the harbor. Two days later, mid-afternoon of 31 May, the three midgets were launched while their mother ships were about seven miles off Sydney Harbor. Two made it into the harbor and torpedoed a barracks ship, HMAS *Kuttabul*. Both

Row on row of Imperial Japan's deadly Kaiten midget subs are seen in this photograph. Lieutenants Hiroshi Kuroki and Sekio Nishina are credited with the original idea of these two-man suicide weapons—and both died in them.

midget submarines were sunk by Allied surface ships and later located by divers. The third midget was never heard from after launching.

The action ended with the I.24 surfacing and firing a number of shots into the city of Sydney with its deck gun before leaving the area. This created considerable confusion, but not much else—the Japanese claimed to have torpedoed the British battleship *Warspite*, when what they actually fired at was the U.S. heavy cruiser *Chicago*, which they missed.

While Captain Sasaki's midgets were in action at Sydney, another division of five submarines made an attack—with the best success so far by midgets—on shipping at Diego Saurez, the Royal Navy base on Madagascar. The mother submarines were I.16, I.18, I.20, I.30, and I.8, carrying a floatplane for reconnissance, as flagship. One submarine, I.30, did not carry a midget, and the one on board I.18 was out of service, so only I.20 and I.16 launched midgets, with their crews consisting respectively of Lieutenant Saburo Akieda and Petty Officer Masami Takemoto, and Ensign Katsusuka Iwase and Petty Officer Kozo Takada. A flight over Diego Saurez by I.8's float plane after the attack revealed one tanker sunk and a British battleship heavily damaged.

The next and last time Japanese midget submarines were launched from submarines was in November and December of 1942. The I.16, I.20, and I.24, each carrying a midget, sailed from Truk, under Captain N. Ota, to attack U.S. shipping at Lunga Point, on Guadalcanal. The attack was made the night of 15 November. Only one midget survived, and it withdrew to the northern end of Guadalcanal where it was scuttled by its crew. The Japanese claimed to have sunk a destroyer and a transport, but U.S. records show no transport sunk in the Guadalcanal area at all during that time, and the only U.S. destroyer lost was damaged by surface gunfire and sunk by U.S. ships.

The I.16 and I.20 each made two more attacks in the Lunga area. They launched a total of four midgets, lost two of them, and claimed to have sunk four merchant ships and one destroyer. The only U.S. torpedo loss in that area during the period involved was the cargo ship *Alchiba*, sunk by a submarine torpedo at Lunga Point on 30 November.

For some time in 1944, a group of ten midget submarines was stationed on the island of Cebu, in the Philippines, under the command of Rear Admiral Kaku Harada, who had been the pre-war commander of the *Chiyoda*

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when it was first converted to midget submarine use.

By December 1944, numerous sorties had been made against ships originally spotted by shore lookouts on Mindanao. Four midgets were damaged and one lost in these operations, but they claimed to have sunk one carrier, two cruisers, four destroyers and 11 cargo ships. When the Americans took Cebu on 28 March, 1945, all the remaining midgets had been scuttled. For their operations in the Philippines, as elsewhere, Japanese claims of destruction of U.S. ships have to be balanced against official records. There were no U.S. cruisers sunk in the Philippines, and the only carrier lost there, the *Princeton*, was hit by a dive bomber in the Battle of Leyte Gulf on 24 October 1944, and then sunk by U.S. forces.

As the combat zone moved nearer to Japan's home islands late in 1944, the 33rd Koryo Group of six midget submarines and 130 men was organized and stationed on Okinawa, where it arrived in January 1945. The first of four sorties was made on March 25. Only one of three midgets returned, to report two torpedo hits on one ship. Two midgets went out the next day, and again only one returned, this time reporting hits on an American cruiser. Actually, the only U.S. vessel hit that day was the destroyer *Halligan*, sunk by a mine. The only U.S. cruisers damaged by enemy action at Okinawa were all hit by suicide planes. Two more missions were carried out from Okinawa, on 30 March and 5 April, involving three submarines. All of them returned without hitting any targets. They were scuttled, then their crews joined the army ground forces, only to die in the land battle for Okinawa that followed the American invasion of the island on April 1.

Five midget submarines were transported to the Aleutians in 1942, but they were never used in action and were destroyed by the Japanese prior to their capture.

What appeared to be a Japanese attempt at a last-ditch stand was organized in February of 1945, under Rear Admiral Noboru Owada. This was Tokko Squadron 11, a shore-based unit for the defense of the Home Islands. The majority were deployed on the southern shores of Kyushu, along Ki Strait, at Isa Bay and Sagami Bay. They were to be used in one last assault against American forces making an actual invasion of Japan, but the sudden termination of hostilities, after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, rendered them useless for anything but scrap metal. □

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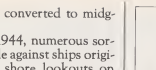

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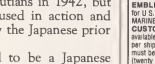

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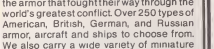

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Personality

Continued from page 10

ahead of the tank columns often were clay pigeons drawing—and revealing—enemy fire. The artillery instructors back in the States would have paled, since the Cub pilots had been instructed to fly *behind* Allied lines, not in front. A good-sized rock in the right place could have knocked any of the tiny, wood-and-muslin aircraft right out of the sky.

The first attempt to mount rockets on the spotter planes came during the American breakout from Normandy marked by the fall of St. Lo July 18. A couple of pilots placed a bazooka under each wing and shot up a few enemy trucks as Patton's Third Army now raced for Coutances. But Charlie Carpenter wasn't one of them.

It wasn't until his own first taste of battle at Countances that he began his heroic feats and sprang into legendary status. His compatroits gave up the bazookas because, as correspondent Wes Gallagher put it, "They found that diving the frail craft down a 200-yard firing range into a hail of German fire was extremely unhealthy, and returned to their observation duties."

More "routinely," the spotters flew over enemy lines until the Germans shot at them and thus disclosed their location. The spotter's main task, in effect, was to aim his side's guns at German concentrations ahead. The Cubs also flew ahead of Patton's endless line of supply trucks known as the Red Ball Express to check for disabled vehicles blocking the road.

On the road to Countances, savage fighting raged in and near Marigny, east of St. Lo. From its position on the Third Army's right flank, the Fourth Armored then swept down and captured Countances. The fresh American troops reacted to their victory by continuous fire even as the enemy was evacuating. And the race continued, down the coast toward Avranches.

Himself caught up in the excitement, Carpenter had gone in search of a suitable landing spot for his corps of Cubs. Since the Normandy farm fields often had been mined, he was looking for a pasture with grazing cows, a sure sign of a safe landing place. Before he could find such a haven, however, he spotted an American tank and infantry column pinned down outside a French village by German 88 fire.

From his perspective aloft, it appeared no one was in command of the stymied tank formation—and behind the German artillery there was no significant back-up in sight. Carpenter

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simply landed his plane, and took command after climbing aboard the lead tank.

He commenced firing its .50-caliber machine gun as, helmetless, he led the attack that broke up the German defenses and seired an important town. As the story goes, every time Carpenter's tank came to a corner, he would yell to its crewmen below him, "Let her go," and the tank's 75mm cannon would bang away.

The system worked fine for five corners, but at the sixth, the tank round blew a bulldozer blade on an American Sherman sky high. The flying pieces unfortunately injured several of his own men. In the aftermath, Carpenter was threatened with a court-martial. His wife Elda, when she heard back home, wired him through the International Red Cross with a plea to stop trying to win the war by himself. General Patton flew in and reviewed the situation, then gruffly told the men involved that if they would get off their hind ends such a battle could have been won 24 hours sooner. Carpenter, he said, was the kind of fighting man he wanted in his army.

The entry into Avranches marked a 60-mile penetration from the D-Day beaches—the seed of invincibility was planted firmly in the minds of the Fourth Armored's personnel. Patton's method of fighting also had been established, his rampage through the Cherbourg Peninsula typical of his tactics. He sent his tanks forward, and when they hit something they couldn't crack immediately, he sent them around it. His method was to reconnoiter, then reinforce the reconnaissance, and then attack.

In much the same spirit, the Carpenter Cub patrol became a one-man army. Achieving a maneuverability hardly surpassed by the war's more sophisticated aircraft, Carpenter delighted in dropping hand grenades on the enemy below. He once landed in a battle zone near Sens to "inspect" a column of still-burning tanks—and captured six German soldiers with rifles he had picked up nearby.

As he shot-up German staff cars and carried on his one-man crusade, his favorite headgear under fire was a long-billed baseball cap that kept the sun out of his eyes.

Carpenter was sent ahead of the advancing troops to gather information on Lorient, considered a "hell-hole" by U.S. reconnaissance pilots because of the flak protecting its U-boat pens. Fires behind the ramparts suggested that the port's more valuable assets already were being liquidated to prevent the Americans from

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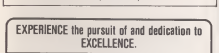

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using them. Smoke still rose from the recent visits of Allied bombers, which had blasted at the concrete-roofed U-boat pens. Carpenter couldn't be sure that the Germans had abandoned every inch of ground—he soared higher to get a better view of the damage, but the German gunners resented his curiosity and some of the flak that made Lorient notorious came floating across the skies after him. Nothing hit the L-4, but the area where it had been seconds before was filled with flak.

"They're firing 88s at us," Carpenter told M'Gowan as they ducked under. "It's less risky down low." Carpenter had to shout over his shoulder in the confined cockpit. "They won't shoot—it will give away their position. Besides, the nearer the ground we are, the harder it will be for the gunners to hit us."

The plane hedge-hopped to safety, but for Major Carpenter the risks without more tangible results were becoming too great. He began to think about the men who had mounted bazookas on their Cubs at St. Lo. After Lorient, he put two bazookas on his Cub, a number soon increased to six. Now, the puddle-jumping flights would be really worthwhile, he figured.

He used the first bazooka model produced for the war. It fired its round by means of a battery igniter. The unit itself was a solid, one-piece metal tube 54½ inches long. It weighed slightly more than 13 pounds. Its projectile had a range of 500 yards, but the sights were calibrated for 100 and 300 yards. Carpenter had to launch his rocket rounds carefully, so the back-blast wouldn't ignite his flimsy craft's wings of doped fabric.

With her fresh firepower added, he dubbed his L-4 "Rosie the Rocketer," a name painted on the side of her nose. His "Rosie" had no radio. She relied upon a fixed-pitch wooden prop and a 65-horsepower 0-170-3 Continental engine for power.

Within a few weeks, Carpenter was credited with knocking out a German armored vehicle and four tanks. Often diving within 75 yards of his targets, be eventually was credited with knocking out six enemy tanks. His big day came north of Nancy when the Germans launched a tank attack and forced some GIs to hide in a creek. Carpenter dove down through a barrage of German fire in a series of attacks, firing all of his bazookas. During the day he fired the rounds, returning to base camp only to reload. The ground troops credited Carpenter with two tanks—thus he became the first "puddle-jumper" pilot to knock out two tanks in one day. Explained Car-

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penter later: "Some people around here think I'm nuts, but I just believe that if we're going to fight a war we have to get on with it 60 minutes an hour, 24 hours a day."

War correspondents who flew with Carpenter learned what was meant by this statement. Ken Koyen (*Stars and Stripes*) was one. As they flew over the front where Fourth Armored tanks were blasting German positions with 75s and machine-gun tracer fire, the major pointed out a burned vehicle. "That's the German armored car I hit the other day." He then pointed to a German tank next to a building in a village and another hidden under a tree.

Carpenter shoved down "Rosie's" nose and shouted, "We'll go down for a try at the one in town."

Diving almost vertically to less than 300 yards off the ground, Major Carpenter squinted through the sight, then touched a switch firing two of the rockets, one from each wing. As Koyen later reported, there was a dull boom and a flash of flame. "Rosie" stuck her nose up in a steep climb that would have been called evasive action if she were a Thunderbolt. Tiles on the roof of the house next to the German tank disappeared in a cloud of red dust. "Allowed too much for the wind," the major said. "Anyhow, our tanks will know there's something there to shoot at. Next we'll try for that tank under the tree."

Again the Cub dove and two rockets flashed groundward. Dirt spouted from the ground near the tank—apparently a massive Panther. "That's another one marked for the boys on the ground," the flying artilleryman said, as he wheeled "Rosie" around for another shot at the tank in the village. The last two rockets roared from the launcher tubes in one explosion and blasted the ground 15 feet from the tank.

Major Carpenter climbed and circled above the tanks, critically examining his work. "I don't expect to get them very often, especially from this long range, but I imagine I worry them at that."

German gunners then began shooting at the Cub—black puffs of antiaircraft shell bursts spotted the sky. Carpenter commented, "They usually don't shoot at a Cub for fear of observation and artillery fire, but when they see it shooting bazookas they cut loose. Aggravates them some, I guess."

Carpenter then turned "Rosie" back to her hillside pasture landing field. Pilots of liaison planes did not fly back to the comforts of a base, as did bomber pilots. Instead, they lived in foxholes or tents with the front-line troops and ate cold "C" rations. Car-

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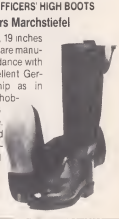

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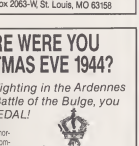

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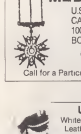

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penter had learned to brew coffee in his tent over a blowtorch he captured from one of the German tanks he knocked out. "Every time I show up now, they shoot with everything they have," he said. "They never used to bother Cubs. Bazookas must be bothering them a bit."

By November the Third Army's winter offensive was on. The winter's snow flurries made air support uncertain, but the "Fourth Armored Air Force" was still scudding over the Fourth Armored's columns. One plane that everyone knew by then was "Rosie". Carpenter did not let weather interfere with his operations. He took

In flight: A light Marine Corps observation plane carries a 1st Division photographer over Okinawa, 1945.

off one day from a muddy landing strip during a snowfall. He proceeded to blow up a German ammo truck, fired several times at a Panther tank and returned.

Earlier, Carpenter had been credited with liberating Quimperle, midway between Lorient and Quimper. Flying ahead of the Fourth Armored as it spearheaded into Brittany, he discovered the Germans had pulled out of Quimperle, an inland port big enough for 800-ton ships. The French were moving toward it and wanted American support. What they got, first, was "Bazooka Charlie."

Carpenter, with correspondent M'Gowan aboard, flew low over the city, skimming rooftops, flying down city streets, zooming over wharves while waving to gendarmes on traffic duty. People tumbled out of houses calling out, "*Les Americaines, les Americaines.*" As Carpenter circled the town for the third time, the crowds became frantic with joy, clapping, throwing kisses, making the V-for-Victory sign. When Carpenter landed his plane nearby, they brought him

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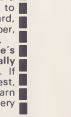

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cider, eggs, baskets of pears, anything they could find.

Carpenter was eventually credited with his six tanks and awarded the Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star, and the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster. He reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

But Charlie Carpenter was discharged from the service in 1945 with Hodgkins disease and given just two years to live.

Engaged in a new, personal war, the school teacher from Mid-America fought the disease as he had the Germans—bravely, resolutely.

He passed the two-year mark, but

Piper Cub pilot Charlie Carpenter loads bazooka rockets, with which he knocked out six German tanks.

then had to face death and major surgery every few years.

The doctors told him each time that if it heals, you are okay, otherwise you are gone.

It was a "terrible cloud to live under," said the World War II hero's wife Elda later.

Charlie Carpenter lived 21 more years, until March 22, 1966. During those years he taught briefly at Roosevelt Military Academy in Aledo, Il. But he also obtained a master's degree in history from the University of Illinois. He saw his daughter Carol graduate from college and enter the Peace Corps.

He then taught at Urbana (Il.) High School for 15 years, almost until the time of his death. He was known as a teacher who always insisted upon including current events in his history classes.

He was gone, then, but far from forgotten. As good friend William Christison recently said; "I am 73 years old, and I have never met anyone else like him." □

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